

**Secret Matches:**  
The Unknown Training Games of  
Mikhail Botvinnik

Selected Games Annotated  
and Theoretical Section  
by Jan Timman

Edited by Hanon W. Russell



Russell Enterprises, Inc.  
Milford, CT USA

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by Jan Timman

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## **The Theoretical Importance of Botvinnik's Training Games**

**by Jan Timman**

### **Part I Tournaments & Matches**

No other player was as famous as Botvinnik for his opening preparation until Kasparov came upon the scene. This reputation was in part the result of a life-style that never failed to make a deep impression on people. Botvinnik was known to be a very serious man with strict habits. During the 1946 Groningen tournament, he, together with his wife and child, was totally secluded from the outside world, spending all his time in his hotel room, where he would even take his meals. The Staunton Tournament in 1946 was one of his first appearances in a major tournament in the West. The picture I have just sketched is taken from the tournament book. Since that time, there have been numerous other stories to confirm the image of meticulous planning and thorough preparation.

Part of this image was the training games he played. He first alluded to the existence of these training games in his book about the 1941 Soviet Championship. This tournament was played in match format with six players playing each other four times. In the 20-round contest, often referred to as a "match-tournament," Botvinnik won with a two-and-one-half-point margin over his nearest rival, Keres. In the introduction to the tournament book, Botvinnik writes: "A few words about my own play. I prepared for the tournament long and successfully...My old friend, master (now grandmaster) Ragozin, was of great help to me in my preparations. I played training games with him under 'corresponding' conditions. As I had grown unaccustomed to tobacco smoke and had suffered a little from it in other tournaments, during our games Ragozin often threw up real 'smoke screens'. And so when my opponents in the tournament sent streams of tobacco smoke in my direction, (accidentally, of course!), it had no effect on me."

This exposition, with an ironic undertone toward the end, clearly shows that Botvinnik used these training games for various purposes. He mainly wanted to get ready for the battle; the openings and their theoretical aspects did not seem to be his primary aim. Still, the myth

about the theoretical importance of the training games seemed to have its own life.

Gligoric in *The World Chess Championship* (1972) states: “Only Botvinnik was capable for months, day after day, of playing exhausting private matches from which he gained no obvious advantage and of which the world would never know. Sometimes one of these games would be repeated in a real tournament as, for example, Botvinnik’s famous victory over Spielmann in 1935 in only 11 moves or some of his victories in the match-tournament of 1948, when he became world champion. On these occasions Botvinnik’s opponents seemed to be unarmed contestants against a champion armed to the teeth.

“Who was Botvinnik’s sparring partner (or partners)? Not even his closest friends knew. It is supposed that at one time it was Ragozin, then Averbakh and now his official trainer Goldberg.

“Or perhaps he chose his partners according to the circumstances; this time Bronstein or Geller - as the most like Tal? Were there many or only one? Everything is wrapped in the veil of mystery.”

Gligoric was right about Averbakh and he could have known about Ragozin. But what strikes me most is his assumption about the game against Spielmann and that some games of the 1948 world championship were already anticipated in the training games. Myth-making is in full swing here!

As the readers will attest, there were no training games that directly helped Botvinnik in the enormous task of becoming world champion. (I am not even talking about the Spielmann game.) Still there is an interesting detail: In 1947 Botvinnik played two games against Ragozin which may be considered as general preparation for the 1948 world championship tournament. Why so few? In order to explore this, I have made a systematic review of Botvinnik’s most important events, together with the preceding training games. In this respect it is noteworthy that Botvinnik’s first mention of training games preceding a tournament - in 1941 - is in the tournament book, although even then it should be noted that the book itself did not appear for six years.

## **1. The 1941 Soviet Championship**

The tournament started on March 23, so there were eight days

between games 17 and this tournament. Two other games, 15 and 16, were also part of his preparation.

Special mention should be made of Botvinnik's treatment of the Tartakower Variation in game 16. (I have annotated the game in full.) In the 4<sup>th</sup> round he played 8 ♖c2 (instead of 8 ♖d3) against Bondarevsky. Apparently he found this move - which became popular after Kasparov-Timman, 4<sup>th</sup> game, 1984 - more accurate. Bondarevsky answered with the obvious 8...c5, which is criticized by Botvinnik ("Here 8...c6 is usual. Black's active move is hardly appropriate.") Still, after 9 dxc5 ♗xc5 10 cxd5 exd5, he continued with 11 ♖d2 (instead of Kasparov's 11 0-0!), which is nowadays considered harmless. Botvinnik later lost the game because he was too optimistic about White's chances.

## **2. The 1944 Soviet Championship**

The tournament started on May 20, leaving Botvinnik only five days after game 19. Botvinnik only played two games (18 and 19) before this tournament. Both games are featured with full notes. (Game 19 will also be mentioned in the second part of this article.)

## **3. 1946 Staunton Tournament, Groningen**

The tournament started on August 13. There was an interval of almost one month between the tournament and games 22-24. Botvinnik repeated the line in game 22 (annotated in full) in his game against Boleslavsky in the 7<sup>th</sup> round. Boleslavsky opted for the quiet 10 d3 (instead of Ragozin's 10 d4) which is not very crucial. Botvinnik won the game in 33 moves. Against Yanofsky, in the 15<sup>th</sup> round, he avoided the line, possibly out of fear for his opponent's preparation. Botvinnik got an excellent game, but overextended and finally lost.

## **4. 1948 World Championship**

The championship started on March 8. Botvinnik's two training games were played almost a half-year before. It is interesting to see the



pattern that is being used. Three games for 1941, two games for 1944, three for 1946 and two for 1948, the most important event. Superstition? In the three events prior to the 1948 championship tournament, Botvinnik had been successful as well. Anyway, it is understandable that he didn't want to play the games right before the event: The Hague/Moscow tournament lasted long enough.

### 5. 1951 Bronstein Match

The match started on March 16. Again, Botvinnik only played two games, right before the start of the match. Noteworthy is the terrible disaster in game 29. In most games against Bronstein, Botvinnik used the Dutch Defense, but in the three games using the Slav (4, 8 and 18) he opted for the safe 3...♟f6. Still, he continued the discussion about the sharp 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♟c3 e6 4 e4 dxe4 5 ♟xe4 ♟b4+ 6 ♟d2 ♞xd4 in his games with Kan. According to recent theory, this line is still under a cloud for Black.

### 6. 1954 Smyslov Match

This match started on the same day as the Bronstein match, which cannot be a coincidence. I quote Gligoric again: "In order to prepare himself thoroughly, Smyslov wanted the match to begin as late as possible, but Botvinnik did not want to have to play the end of the match during the hot season in Moscow..."

For this match, Botvinnik must have had far more extensive preparation than for his match against Bronstein. In the period late January-early February he played no fewer than 12 games against Kan, a match in itself that Botvinnik won convincingly 8½-3½, with no losses. In this pre-match, Botvinnik first tried the sharp Winawer line 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♟c3 ♟b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♟a5. This line, which nowadays has become the favorite of the Armenians Vaganian and Lputian, was almost unexplored at that particular time. Kan did not handle this unknown position very well, adjourning in game 56 in a much worse position (although admittedly this game was not part of Botvinnik's preparation) and he was crushed in game 55.

Smyslov did not treat this line the same way as Kan. He refrained

from the queen sortie, choosing 6 b4 cxd4 7 ♖b5 ♗c7 8 f4. He scored only one draw in these two games (not necessarily a result of the opening) and then abandoned the line.

The other important opening sequence appeared in what Botvinnik calls “The Czech Defense” of the Slav. After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♖f6 4 ♗c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♗f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♗xc4 ♗b4 8 0-0 ♗bd7 Botvinnik played 9 ♗h4 against Smyslov in the 12<sup>th</sup> game (as in game 51). Smyslov rather quickly answered 9...0-0 and reached equality, although he later lost the game. Kan had played 9...♗g4 in game 51. (I will return to this game in the next section.)

Incidentally, this 12<sup>th</sup> game is one of three examples that Botvinnik, in the match book, gives to illustrate the following remarkable statement: “As opposed to Bronstein, Smyslov could, during the match, have performances that were so impressive that they apparently could only be achieved if Smyslov had made a step forward in finding new, so far unknown methods of opening preparation.” Botvinnik is wondering how Smyslov could react so quickly to opening situations that were quite new.

This is in fact the same sort of allegation that Korchnoy made after his final game against Karpov in Baguio 1978 and that Kasparov made in 1986 after losing three games in a row. The only difference is that Botvinnik was more clever than Korchnoy and Kasparov, since he didn’t formulate a direct accusation and resorted to his usual ironic understatement.

Why am I relating this story? Because in one of his illustrative examples, Botvinnik mentions the training games. In the 14<sup>th</sup> game, Botvinnik handled the King’s Indian the following way: 1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♗c3 d6 6 ♖f3 ♗bd7 7 0-0 e5 8 e4 c6 9 ♗e3. Now Smyslov played the very sharp 9...♗g4 10 ♗g5 ♗b6 11 h3 exd4 and went on to win an impressive game. About his 9<sup>th</sup> move, Botvinnik writes: “...I had never played [this move] before, except in training games. Apparently Smyslov had examined the variation in his preparation, since he only used two or three minutes for the next six moves of this complicated game.”

This last feat is indeed remarkable. But it is even more remarkable that Botvinnik mentions the training games, because he never played this line against Ragozin or Kan. Apparently Botvinnik used the

myth surrounding his training games to bluff his opponents. In Smyslov's case, this was quite practical, because it was likely that he would meet him again in a match. Talk about throwing up smoke screens..

### **7. 1957 Smyslov Match**

The match started a bit earlier this time, on March 5. Botvinnik played nine games against Averbakh as preparation. I refer to Averbakh's own comments.

### **8. 1961 Tal Match**

Two matches are missing: the third match against Smyslov in 1958 and the first match against Tal. There could be a plausible explanation for this, for example, that Botvinnik could not find the right sparring partner at that time. On the other hand, there could be a psychological explanation. After losing a match for the first time in his career in 1957, it is possible that Botvinnik took measures to change his preparation and skipped the training games for the 1958 match. According to that logic, he would follow the same strategy in 1960 (because he won the 1958 match) and then changed again, after Tal beat him. One would expect such a superstitious attitude from Korchnoy, but it could also be characteristic of Botvinnik.

Anyway, the second match against Tal started on the regular date, March 16. Prior to the match he played eight games against Furman that finished slightly more than two weeks before the match. Botvinnik played some of his finest games against Furman. In general, he was very strong, maybe at his height in the 1960s. The remarkable thing about these games, however, is that no opening that was played corresponded to any played in the Tal match. I don't believe that Botvinnik feared that Tal would have had the opportunity to get secret access to his preparation. I think it is more likely that Botvinnik was interested in playing the variations that Tal himself played. Botvinnik played 1 e4 twice (and once more in a training game prior to October 1960), although he never played this against Tal and obviously did not intend to play it. With Black, he chose a King's Indian, a Benoni and a Nimzo-Indian - typical Tal openings. If this theory holds, then this was certainly an interesting - and successful - strategy.

## 9. 1970 USSR-Rest of the World Match; Four-player Tournament

These two important events were held one right after another from March 29 through May 7, 1970. These were also Botvinnik's last appearances in tournaments. The four games that Botvinnik played against Balashov were a bit disappointing. Still there was at least one important novelty in game 94. I will come back to this in the next section.

### Part II

#### The Openings

Studying the openings from Botvinnik's games, one very often gets the impression that he cracked difficult opening problems in a modern way. This impression is justified. Botvinnik had a modern way of looking at opening positions. Some of his novelties from these training games would have had a great impact on current theory and a few are still of major importance, according to present theory. The two openings that were played most were the Ruy Lopez and the Slav, both of which Botvinnik played as White and Black. Therefore it is not surprising that the most interesting novelties are to be found there.

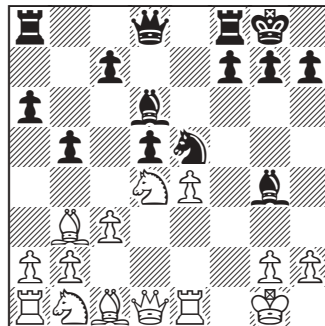
#### Ruy Lopez

“What would Botvinnik have played against the Marshall Gambit?” is a question that a present-day grandmaster who had failed to find a remedy against the Marshall - it is very tough indeed - might ask. The answer is to be found in this book. In game 28, after 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♗c6 3 ♘b5 a6 4 ♘a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♘e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♘b3 0-0 8 c3 d5, Botvinnik replied 9 d4. Nunn and Harding write about this move in *The Marshall Attack* (first published in 1989): “This sharp method of declining the Marshall must be treated with respect, but it should give Black a good type of Open Spanish since he is not required to play ...Be6.”

Then they recommend 9...e×d4 as Black's best. It is a pity that we will never now what Botvinnik had in mind against that move, since

Ragozin chose  $9... \text{d} \times \text{e}4$ . (“Playable, but an unlikely option for a Marshall player to select,” according to Nunn and Harding. Ragozin probably was not a real Marshall player.) That way the game transposed into an Open Spanish and quite an interesting one. After  $10 \text{d} \times \text{e}5 \text{d} \text{e}6$   $11 \text{d} \text{d}4$ , Ragozin opted for a line that is recommended in *Collijn’s L arobok*:  $11... \text{d} \text{a}5$   $12 \text{d} \text{c}2 \text{c}5$   $13 \text{d} \times \text{e}6 \text{f} \times \text{e}6$  and then  $14 \text{c} \text{g}4$ , a new move at the time. The move is suggested by Korchnoy in ECO. Korchnoy follows up with  $14... \text{d} \times \text{f}2$   $15 \text{c} \times \text{e}6+ \text{c} \text{h}8$   $16 \text{d} \text{d}2$  without reaching a conclusion in the line. It looks like Botvinnik’s  $16 \text{d} \text{e}3! \text{d} \text{e}4$   $17 \text{d} \text{d}2$  is far stronger, because White already has a clear advantage.

Against Kan in game 35 he got into this line again, this time arising straight from an Open Spanish move order. Unlike Ragozin, Kan took up the gambit and played  $11... \text{d} \times \text{e}5$ , leading to the very complicated “Breslamer Variation”. After  $12 \text{f}3$  Black must sacrifice a piece by  $12... \text{d} \text{d}6$   $13 \text{f} \times \text{e}4 \text{d} \text{g}4$ .



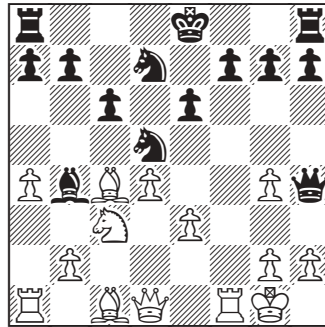
This is the starting position for a theoretical discussion that took place at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Botvinnik now played  $14 \text{c} \text{d}2$ , the main move since the two games Wolf-Tarrasch, Teplitz-Sch onau 1922 and Karlsbad 1923, where von Bardeleben’s old recommendation  $14 \text{c} \text{c}2$  had been replaced. After  $14... \text{c} \text{h}4$   $15 \text{h}3$ , *Collijn’s L arobok* (Botvinnik must have made a careful study of this book) now gives  $15... \text{c}5$  with an exclamation point, a recommendation followed by Gr unfeld in the Teplitz-Sch onau tournament book, by Kmoch in his *Nachtrag von Hans Kmoch, Handbuch des Schachspiels von P.R. Bilguer* and more recently by Keres in his volume on open games and Korchnoy in ECO. The variation they all give is  $15... \text{c}5$   $16 \text{c} \text{f}2 \text{c} \times \text{f}2+$   $17 \text{c} \times \text{f}2 \text{d} \text{d}7!$   $18 \text{d} \text{f}5 \text{d} \times \text{f}5$   $19 \text{e} \times \text{f}5 \text{d} \text{d}3+$   $20 \text{c} \text{f}1 \text{d} \times \text{e}1$   $21 \text{c} \times \text{e}1 \text{f} \text{f} \text{e}8+$   $22 \text{c} \text{f}2 \text{f} \text{e}5$ , followed by  $23... \text{f} \text{a} \text{e}8$

and Black has an excellent game.

Botvinnik's 16 ♖f1!! refutes the whole idea, so Black should probably try 15...♞ae8 or Tarrasch's 15...♗d7 instead of 15...c5. New editions of Keres' book and ECO will have to mention Botvinnik's great novelty from the early 1950s.

### The Slav Defense

First of all, let me return to Botvinnik's game against Kan (game 51) that made him so suspicious about Smyslov's alleged first-hand knowledge: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♗f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♗xc4 ♗b4 8 0-0 ♗bd7 9 ♗h4 ♗g4 10 f3 ♗d5. Now White played the by no means obvious 11 fxg4!. After 11...♞xh4, White has two attractive choices:



(a) 12 ♞f3. This was not Botvinnik's choice, but he put the move in parentheses in his comments, indicating that he possibly considered it the best. It is quite remarkable that the stem game with this move is Ragozin(!)-Kaliwoda, World Correspondence Championship 1956-59, in which White was better after 12...0-0 13 ♗d2 a5 14 ♗b3 ♞ad8 15 ♞ad1 ♗5f6 16 h3. A tentative conclusion could be that Botvinnik confided in Ragozin, sharing his theoretical knowledge.

It is noteworthy that the line with 11 fxg4 a ♗d 12 ♞f3 became generally known by the game Tal-Haag, Tbilisi 1969, in which Black varied with 14...♗d6, but could not solve his problems after 15 g3 ♞d8 16 e4 ♗b4 17 ♞ad1 ♞c8 18 ♗e3 ♞h8 19 g5. Later games have not essentially changed the verdict on this line.

(b) 12 e4. The striking thing about Botvinnik's move is that Kondratiev in his 1985 book on the Slav gives the move an exclamation point. What happened in the game, including 15 ♞af3, is also given by

Tukmakov as clearly better for White. He recommends 12...♗5b6 (instead of 12...♗xc3) 13 ♖b3 a5 as Black's best, adding that after 14 ♗f3 White has a slight edge. This may have also been Botvinnik's conclusion. At any rate, the credit for playing this way should not go to Ragozin or Tal (as in some sources) but to Botvinnik.

Botvinnik's treatment of the Meran Variation as Black was also very modern. I give two examples:

(a) In game 46 Botvinnik introduced the variation in the old main line that is still considered to be the best. After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♖d3 dxc4 7 ♖xc4 b5 8 ♖d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 e5 cxd4 11 ♗xb5 ♗xe5 12 ♗xe5 axb5 13 ♗f3 ♗a5+ 14 ♖e2 ♖d6 15 ♗c6+ ♖e7 Kan went berserk with 16 ♗xf7. Reshevsky, two years later, improved White's play with 16 ♖d2 against Botvinnik (Moscow 1955) but failed to get an advantage. This verdict still holds, although Wells, in his 1994 book *The Complete Semi-Slav* mentions that 13...♖b4+ (instead of 13...♗a5+) is "perhaps more solid and reliable."

(b) In game 60, Botvinnik uses a system that is still topical. According to present-day theory, it was first played in 1963, becoming popular through young Soviet players, notably 1970s, in the late 1970s. It is a pity that Kan's 15 ♖g5 was hardly a testing move.

I will now conclude this article with some observations about two other openings.

## The French Defense

Botvinnik used his favorite French Defense on six occasions as Black. I begin with a novelty by Ragozin: In game 25, he improved significantly on the game Bogolyubov-Flohr, Nottingham 1936: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♖b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♖xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♗e7 7 ♗g4 ♗f5 (It is understandable that Botvinnik was not fond of sacrificing his Kingside by 7...♗c7 or 7...cxd4, while the alternatives 7...0-0 and 7...♗f8 probably made him feel uneasy about his King.) 8 ♖d3 h5 9 ♗f4 (This was also Bogolyubov's choice and it is still considered to be White's best. Alekhine, in the tournament book, is of a different mind. He gives the move a question mark and writes "9 ♗h3 was the logical move, threatening 10 g4." Later practical examples have shown that it is not such a terrible threat.) 9...cxd4 10 cxd4 ♗xh4 11 ♗xh4 (stronger than

Bogolyubov's 11 ♖f3.) 11...♗xh4 and now Ragozin's simple 12 g3! is stronger than 12 ♗g5, as was played in Yanofsky-Uhlmann, Stockholm 1962. In the further course of the game, Ragozin completely outplayed Botvinnik. After a few missed wins, the game ended unfinished with White still holding a slight edge.

It is understandable that Ragozin this time refrained from positional lines like 7 ♖f3 or 7 a4, because he had fared badly with in it in game 19. I have analyzed this game in full, but it is still worth mentioning that Botvinnik's 10...♖c8! as used by Uhlmann and Korchnoy decades later is still considered to be the best move.

Botvinnik, in turn, must have been highly dissatisfied with the developments in game 25 and I guess that at that time he had already started to study the consequences of the sharp line 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗a5 that he had twice played against Kan and later used in his match against Smyslov. The latter chose the solid approach with 6 b4 cxd4 7 ♗b5, which is still popular these days, although it has been shown, notably by Lputian, that White cannot count on securing an opening advantage. Kan played the sharper 6 b4 cxd4 7 ♖g4 ♗e7 8 ♗b5 ♗c7 9 ♖xg7 ♖g8 10 ♖xh7 in games 48 and 55. Both games continued 10...a6!, a move that has been attributed to Bronstein, but in future opening books will have to be attributed to Botvinnik.

In game 48, Botvinnik, after 11 ♗xc7+ ♖xc7 12 ♗e2, opted for 12...♖xe5, a move that was discredited in all "old" opening texts. It was only in the mid-1980s that Vaganian and Lputian began to show that this was the way to play the system with Black. Again, as in the Slav, Kan did not play the most critical continuation, 13 ♗b2, so there was no further test of Botvinnik's understanding of the line. From this point of view, game 55 was even more disappointing. Kan chose 11 ♗xd4 (instead of 11 ♗xc7+), which is obviously feeble. It is somewhat regrettable that Kan was no match for Botvinnik from the point of view of opening theory, otherwise we might have learned more about Botvinnik's deep opening preparation.

## **The Queen's Gambit**

I have analyzed games 16 and 18 in full, showing Botvinnik's attempts to tackle the Tartakower. These attempts are still important today.



In a completely different line, in game 94, Botvinnik showed how to improve on his games versus Petrosyan in the 1963 title match. After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗e7 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗f4 c6 6 e3 ♗f5 7 g4 ♗e6, he did not choose the modest 8 ♗d3 or 8 h3 as in his games against Petrosyan, but chose the rigorous 8 h4. Balashov replied 8...h5. Botvinnik won the game quite easily. Slightly more than a month later, at Oegstgeest 1970, Spassky, against Botvinnik, played the more prudent 8...♗d7. After the further 9 h5 ♖b6 10 ♖b1 ♗f6 11 f3 h6 12 ♗d3 ♖a5 13 ♗e2 b5, White could have kept a slight edge with 14 ♖f2, according to the tournament book.

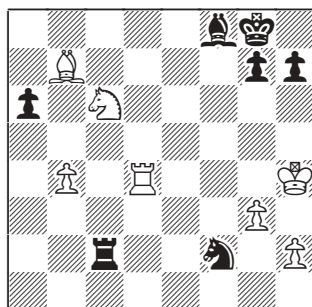
The sharp line beginning with 8 h4 became quite popular. Kasparov played it in the crucial 21<sup>st</sup> game of his second match with Karpov, in which he missed a win at move 40. It is worth noting Kasparov's comments in the match book: "Botvinnik, the originator of the plan beginning with 7 g4, considers 8 h4 to be the most energetic, seizing still more space on the kingside. That is what I played."

And with that quote, I conclude this review...

**(1) Botvinnik-Kaminer, Game 1, Match, 1924** 1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♟c3 ♞g7 4 ♟f3 d6 5 e4 O-O 6 h3 ♟bd7 7 ♞f4 b6 8 ♞d3 ♞b7 9 O-O ♞e8 10 ♞d2 e5 11 dxe5 ♟xe5 12 ♟xe5 dxe5 13 ♞h6 ♞d8 14 ♞xg7 ♞xg7 15 ♟d5 ♟xd5 16 cxd5 c6 17 ♞ac1 ♞d7 18 dxc6 ♞xc6 19 ♞c3 ♞c8 20 ♞a6 ♞b7 21 ♞xe5+ f6 22 ♞b5 ♞xb5 23 ♞xb5 ♞xe4 24 ♞xc8 ♞xc8 25 ♞e1 ♞c5 26 a4 ♞e5 27 f3 ♞b7 28 ♞xe5 fxe5 29 ♞f2 ♞f6 30 h4 h6 31 ♞e3 ♞d5 32 a5 bxa5 33 g4 g5 34 h5 ♞b3 35 ♞d3 ♞d1 36 ♞c6 ♞e6 37 ♞c4 ♞d6 38 ♞e4 ♞e2+ 39 ♞b3 ♞c5 40 ♞c3 ♞b5 41 ♞b7 ♞c6 0-1

**(2) Kaminer-Botvinnik, Game 2, Autumn, 1924** (Notes/marks by Kaminer) 1 d4 ♟f6 2 ♟f3 d5 3 c4 e6 4 ♞g5 ♟bd7 5 e3 c6 6 a3? ♞b6? 7 ♞c2 dxc4 8 ♞xc4 ♞d6 9 ♟c3 h6 10 ♞xf6 ♟xf6 11 ♞c1? ♞c7? 12 ♟e4 ♞e7 13 ♟xf6+ ♞xf6 14 O-O O-O 15 ♞a2 ♞d7 16 ♞b1 ♞fe8 17 ♞h7+ ♞f8 18 e4 e5 19 dxe5 ♞xe5 20 ♟xe5 ♞xe5 21 f4 ♞d4+ 22 ♞h1 ♞e7 23 e5 ♞g8 24 ♞cd1! ♞xb2? (Correct was 24...♞b6) 25 ♞d3 ♞g4? (25...♞ad8 was the only move) 26 ♞d6+ ♞e8 27 e6! ♞xe6 (27...♞f6 does not help: 28 ♞d7+ ♞f8 29 ♞xb7 ♞e8 30 ♞b4+ ♞e7 31 ♞d7 ♞xb4 32 ♞xf7 mate) 28 f5 1-0

**(2a) Botvinnik-Kaminer, Game 3** (fragment; remarks by Kaminer):



White's last move was ♞f4-d4, upon which there followed: 1...♞xc6, and Black won quickly, since the Rook cannot be taken - 2 ♞xc6 ♞e7+ 3 ♞h5 g6+ 4 ♞h6 ♟h3 and mate cannot be avoided.

**(3) Ragozin-Botvinnik, 1936** 1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 e3 ♟f6 4 ♞d3 ♞b4+ 5 ♞d2 ♞xd2+ 6 ♟xd2 d6 7 ♞c2 ♟c6 8 ♟e2 O-O 9 a3 e5 10 ♞c3 ♞e7 11 O-O ♞d7 12 ♞ad1 ♞ae8 13 ♞b1 ♞c8 14 b4 ♞h8 15

♖fe1 ♜f7 16 b5 ♜d8 17 dxe5 ♞xe5 18 f3 ♜d7 19 e4 f4 20 ♜d4  
♜c5 21 ♜2b3 ♜de6 22 ♞d2 ♜xd4 23 ♜xd4 ♜f6 24 ♞f2 ♜h4 25  
♜d2 ♞h5 26 h3 g6 27 ♜e2 ♞e6 28 ♞c1 ♞g8 29 ♜d4 ♜f6 30 ♞a2  
♞g5 31 ♞f1 ♞e5 32 ♜e2 ♞h8 33 ♜c3 ♞g8 34 a4 a5 35 b6 c6 36  
♞d1 ♞d8 37 ♞g1 g5 38 ♜b2 ♞e7 39 ♞fd2 ♜e5 40 ♜a3 h5 Unfin-  
ished

**(4) Botvinnik-Ragozin, 1936** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♞b4 4 ♜c2  
♜c6 5 ♜f3 d5 6 cxd5 ♜xd5 7 ♞d2 ♞xc3 8 bxc3 e5 9 e3 exd4 10  
cxd4 ♞f5 11 ♞d3 ♞h3 12 O-O-O 13 ♞ab1 a6 14 ♞fc1 ♞ad8 15  
♜b2 ♜e4 16 gxh3 ♞d6 17 ♞e1 ♞f6 18 ♜h4 ♜g5 19 f3 ♞e8 20 e4  
♜xh3+ 21 ♞h1 ♜g5 22 ♞g3 ♜e3 23 e5 ♞f4 24 ♞e4 ♞xh4 25  
♞xh4 f5 26 ♞xc6 1-0

**(5) Ragozin-Botvinnik (April?) 1936** 1 ♜f3 e6 2 c4 f5 3 g3 ♜f6 4  
♞g2 ♞e7 5 O-O O-O 6 ♜c3 d5 7 d4 c6 8 ♜c2 ♜e8 9 ♞f4 ♜h5 10  
♞ad1 ♜bd7 11 h3 ♜e4 12 ♜xe4 fxe4 13 ♜e5 ♞f6 14 g4 ♜e8 15  
♞g3 ♜xe5 16 dxe5 ♞e7 17 f3 exf3 18 exf3 b6 19 f4 ♞a6 20 b3  
♞d8 21 ♞h2 ♞c5 22 f5 dxc4 23 bxc4 ♞xd1 24 ♞xd1 h5 25 f6  
hxg4 26 hxg4 ♞c8 27 ♞e4 gxf6 28 ♞g6 ♜e7 29 ♞h4 ♜c7 30 ♞g3  
fxe5 31 ♞g2 ♜g7 32 ♞h1 ♞d4 33 ♞h7+ ♞f7 34 ♜e4 ♞e7 35 ♞g6  
♞h8 36 ♞f1 ♞f8 37 ♞h1 ♞h8 38 ♞f1 ♞f8 39 ♞h1 ♞h8 40 ♞f1 ♞f8  
½-½

**(6) Botvinnik-Ragozin 1936** 1 ♜f3 d5 2 c4 c6 3 e3 ♜f6 4 ♜c3 ♞f5  
5 cxd5 ♜xd5 6 ♞c4 e6 7 O-O ♜d7 8 d4 ♞d6 9 ♜e2 ♜5b6 10 ♞b3  
♞g4 11 h3 ♞h5 12 ♞d2 O-O 13 ♜e4 ♜f6 14 ♜xd6 ♜xd6 15 a3  
♞fd8 16 ♞ac1 ♜e4 17 ♞b4 ♜c7 18 g4 ♞g6 19 ♜e5 ♜d5 20 ♞e1  
♜d6 21 f3 ♜b6 22 ♞a2 f6 23 ♜xg6 hxg6 24 ♞c5 a5 25 ♞g3 ♜f7  
26 e4 ♜c7 27 ♞f2 ♜a6 28 ♜c2 ♜g5 29 ♞e3 ♜xh3+ 30 ♞g2 ♜g5  
31 ♞c4 ♜a7 32 f4 ♜f7 33 f5 gxf5 34 gxf5 exf5 35 ♞cxf5 ♞d6 36  
♜f2 b5 37 ♞xf7+ ♞xf7 38 e5 ♞dd8 39 ♞xf6+ ♞g8 40 ♞f7 1-0

**(7) Botvinnik-Rabinovich 1937** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜f3  
c6 5 e3 a6 6 c5 ♜bd7 7 ♜a4 e5 8 ♞d2 ♜e4 9 ♞e2 g6 10 O-O ♞g7  
11 ♞e1 exd4 12 exd4 O-O 13 ♜d2 f5 14 ♜b3 f4 15 f3 ♜g5 16 ♞a5  
♜f6 17 ♜e1 ♞f7 18 ♜f2 ♜e6 19 ♞ad1 ♞h6 20 ♞fe1 ♞g5 21 ♞f1

dxf8 22 e5 g7 23 b6 Bb8 24 xc8 Bxc8 25 d3 d7 26  
 e2 h4 27 f1 h5 28 e1 g3 29 f2 h4 30 h3 xf2+ 31  
 xf2 g3 32 ee1 g5 33 c1 Bcf8 34 f1 h5 35 e6 Bg7 36  
 e2 g4 37 fxg4 hxg4 38 xg3 gxh3 39 e4 g4 40 f6+ xf6  
 0-1

**(8) Botvinnik-Rabinovich 1937** 1 c4 e5 2 c3 f6 3 f3 c6 4 d4  
 exd4 5 xd4 Bb4 6 g5 Bxc3+ 7 bxc3 e5 8 e4 h6 9 c1 d6 10  
 c2 O-O 11 e2 c5 12 b3 b6 13 f4 g6 14 O-O Bb7 15 d3  
 c7 16 d2 Bae8 17 Bb2 Be7 18 Bae1 Bfe8 19 e2 c6 20 g3  
 c1 g4 22 ee1 c8 23 f2 h5 24 f5 e5 25 f1 a6  
 26 h3 Bb7 27 f4 a4 28 xa4 xa4 29 b3 c6 30 f2 Be7  
 31 d2 a6 32 e3 b5 33 cxb5 axb5 34 e2 d5 35 a3 ed7 36  
 e5 xe5 37 xe5 xe5 38 g4 hxg4 39 hxg4 Be8 40 g5 h7 41 g6  
 fxg6 42 fxg6 hf8 43 b3 xg6 44 f5 B8 45 xc5 xc5 46  
 xc5 xa2 47 d3 c2 48 b4 Bxc3 49 xc6 Bxc6 50 xd5  
 c2 51 d8+ f7 52 e3 b4 53 h5 c3+ 54 d2 g3 55 Bb8  
 g5 56 Bb7+ f6 57 xg6 xg6 58 Bxb4 Be5 59 Bb1 Be6 60  
 Bg1+ f6 61 Bf1+ e7 62 Bf3 Be5 63 Bg3 f6 64 Bf3+ ½-½  
 (2.33 - 1.45)

**(9) Rabinovich-Botvinnik 1937** 1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 g3 f6 4 g2  
 e7 5 h3 O-O 6 O-O d6 7 Bb3 c6 8 d2 h8 9 c3 d5 10 d1  
 e8 11 f4 d6 12 f3 e4 13 c2 d7 14 d3 Bg8 15 ffe5  
 g5 16 f3 fef6 17 xd7 xd7 18 e5 d8 19 e4 fe4 20 fe4  
 xe5 21 dx5 xe4 22 xe4 dx4 23 e3 c5 24 xc5 c6 25  
 f2 Bxd1+ 26 Bxd1 h6 27 Bf1 b6 28 f8 Bg6 29 d4 e3 30  
 Bb4 e2 31 Bf2 Bg7 32 e3 Bf7 33 xe2 g7 34 h5 Bxf2 35  
 xe8 Bg2+ 36 f1 xe8 37 xg2 g6 38 g4 c6+ 39 f2 e4  
 40 e3 Bb1 41 a4 c2 42 a5 bxa5 43 xa5 f7 44 b4 a6 45 d8  
 d1 46 h3 a4 47 d4 e8 48 f6 d7 49 c5 c7 50 g7  
 c6 51 xh6 g2 52 h4 gxh4 53 e3 h3 54 g1 f3 55 g5 e4  
 56 d4 f5 57 c5 e4 58 b5 axb5 59 cxb5 d7 60 b6 e7 61  
 g6 d5 62 h2 1-0 (1.30 - 2.41)

**(10) Ragozin-Botvinnik, October 9, 1938** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 d2  
 fd7 4 e5 fd7 5 d3 b6 6 e2 c5 7 O-O cxd4 8 f4 c5 9 Bb5+  
 d7 10 xd4 Bxb5 11 Bxb5 c6 12 c4 Bc8 13 h1 e7 14 b3

O-O 15 ♖a3 a6 16 ♗d6 ♕xd6 17 exd6 ♜xd6 18 ♗e4 ♜d8 19 ♗xc5 bxc5 20 ♕xc5 ♜e8 21 ♜c1 a5 22 a3 dxc4 23 ♜xc4 ♜d5 24 ♜c2 a4 25 bxa4 e5 26 ♕g1 exf4 27 ♜c5 ♜d7 28 ♜xf4 ♜e1 29 ♜e4 ♜d1 30 ♜ec4 g6 31 a5 ♜b8 32 ♜xc6 ♜bb1 33 ♜c8+ ♜g7 34 ♜c3+ f6 35 ♜c1 ♜bxc1 36 ♜xc1 ♜xc1 37 ♜xc1 ♜a4 38 ♜c7+ ♜h6 39 ♜a7 g5 40 a6 ♜c6 41 ♜b7 ♜xa6 42 ♜b6 ½-½

**(11) Botvinnik-Ragozin, October 10, 1938** 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 ♗f6 4 O-O ♖e7 5 ♜e1 d6 6 d4 ♖d7 7 ♕xc6 ♕xc6 8 ♗c3 exd4 9 ♗xd4 ♖d7 10 h3 O-O 11 ♖f4 ♜e8 12 ♜d3 ♖f8 13 ♜ad1 ♖e6 14 ♖g5 h6 15 ♖h4 g5 16 ♖g3 ♗h5 17 ♖h2 ♖g7 18 ♗xe6 ♜xe6 19 ♜f3 ♗f6 20 e5 ♗e8 21 ♗b5 d5 22 ♜xd5 ♜e7 23 ♗d4 ♜b6 24 ♗f5 ♜b4 25 c3 ♜xb2 26 g4 ♜xa2 27 ♜d7 ♜c4 28 ♗e7+ ♜h8 29 ♗d5 ♜b3 30 ♜xf7 c6 31 ♜f8+ ♕xf8 32 ♜xf8+ ♜h7 33 ♜f7+ ♜h8 34 e6 ♗g7 35 ♖e5 ♜g8 36 ♗e7 1-0

**(12) Botvinnik-Ragozin 1939** 1 c4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♖b4 4 ♗f3 ♗f6 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♖g5 h6 7 ♖h4 c5 8 ♜c1 ♗c6 9 e3 c4 10 ♖e2 g5 11 ♖g3 ♗e4 12 ♗d2 ♗xg3 13 hxg3 ♖e6 14 a3 ♖a5 15 b4 cxb3 16 ♗xb3 ♜c8 17 O-O O-O 18 ♗c5 ♜e7 19 ♜b3 ♕xc3 20 ♜xc3 ♗a5 21 ♜b4 b6 22 ♗xe6 ♜xe6 23 ♖a6 ♜xc3 24 ♜xc3 ♗c4 25 ♜c1 ♜e8 26 ♖b7 b5 27 e4 dxe4 28 d5 ♜b6 29 ♖c6 ♜e5 30 ♖xb5 ♜f5 31 ♜c2 ♜xb5 32 ♜xc4 ♜xd5 33 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 34 ♜c4 ♖a5 35 a4 ♜e5 36 ♜c7 a6 37 ♜c6 ♖a5 38 ♜c4 ♜e5 39 ♜f1 e3 40 f3 e2+ 41 ♜e1 ♜g7 ½-½

**(13) Ragozin-Botvinnik 1940** 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6 5 O-O ♖e7 6 ♜e1 b5 7 ♖b3 d6 8 c3 O-O 9 a4 b4 10 d3 ♗a5 11 cxb4 ♗c6 12 ♖d2 ♖g4 13 ♖c3 ♜b8 14 h3 ♖xf3 15 ♜xf3 ♗xb4 16 d4 exd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗c6 18 ♜d1 ♗xd4 19 ♜xd4 ♗d7 20 ♜d1 ♖f6 21 ♜d2 ♜b4 22 ♗c3 ♜ab8 23 ♖d5 ♖xc3 24 bxc3 ♜xc3 25 ♜c1 ♜a5 26 ♜dc2 ♗c5 27 ♖c6 ♜b6 28 ♜d5 ♜b3 29 ♜c3 ♜b6 30 ♜h2 ♜b2 31 ♜1c2 ♜a1 32 ♜c1 ♜b1 33 ♜xb1 ♜xc3 34 ♜g1 ♗d3 35 ♜b3 ♜d2 36 f3 ♗c5 37 ♜b2 ♜e3+ 38 ♜f2 ♜c3 39 ♜b2 ♜e3+ 40 ♜f2 ♜c3 41 ♜b2 ♜xb2 (1.53 - 2.07) 42 ♜xb2 g6 43 f4 f5 44 e5 ♜f7 45 exd6 cxd6 46 ♖d5+ ♜e7 47 a5 ♜d7 48 ♜b6 ♜c7 49 ♜c6+ ♜d7 50 ♜b6 ♜c7 51 ♜c6+ ♜d7 52 ♜b6 ♜c7 ½-½

### (14) Botvinnik-Ragozin 1940

*Notes by Jan Timman*

<b>1 e4</b>	<b>e5</b>	
<b>2 ♘f3</b>	<b>♗c6</b>	
<b>3 ♗b5</b>		<b>a6</b>
<b>4 ♗a4</b>	<b>♗f6</b>	
<b>5 O-O</b>	<b>d6</b>	
<b>6 c3</b>	<b>♗xe4</b>	
<b>7 d4</b>	<b>♗d7</b>	
<b>8 ♖e2</b>	<b>...</b>	

Very unusual. Before and after this game, White relied on the alternative 8 ♖e1. If Black then retreats the Knight, White wins back the pawn with a better game: 8...♗f6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 11 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 12 ♗xe5 ♗d5 13 ♗g5 and White had the advantage in Lilienthal-Alekhine, Paris 1933. Both players must have been familiar with this game. Most likely Ragozin wanted to counter 8 ♖e1 with 8...f5 as he did in the 1940 Soviet Championship against Keres. (I assume that game was played after this training game.) That game continued in spectacular fashion: 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♗bd2 ♗xf2 11 ♗xe5! ♗xd5 12 ♗xc6+ ♗e7 13 ♗xd8 ♗xa4 14 ♗e6 ♖f7 15 ♗f3 and White has emerged from the complications with a clear edge.

The text is actually a worthy alternative, since White not only wins back the pawn, he also forces Black to sacrifice a pawn, as we shall see.

<b>8 ...</b>	<b>♗f6</b>
<b>9 ♗xc6</b>	<b>...</b>

The same motif as in the Lilienthal-Alekhine game. White gives up his Bishop in order to prevent Black from recapturing on e5 with the Knight.

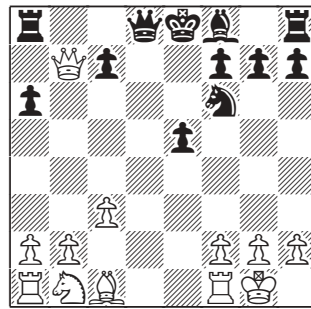
<b>9 ...</b>	<b>♗xc6</b>
<b>10 dxe5</b>	<b>♗xf3</b>

Practically forced, as Black would be under heavy pressure after 10...dxe5 11 ♗xe5 ♖e7 12 ♖e1.

11 ♖xf3 ...

11 ♖xb7 looks good for White, after which Black's Queenside pawns are isolated.

11 ... dxe5  
12 ♖xb7



12 ... ♕d5!

A good decision. Black gives up his c-pawn in order to get a lead in development. The alternative 12...♗d6 would lead to a passive position after 13 ♖c6+! (an important zwiischenschach) 13...♗d7 14 ♗d2 0-0 15 ♗c4 and White is building up a significant strategic plus.

13 ♖xc7 ♗d6  
14 ♖b6 O-O  
15 ♖b3 ...

White's Queen has finally found its way back. Black is obviously not interested in exchanging them.

15 ... ♖c6  
16 ♗d2 ♗fc8

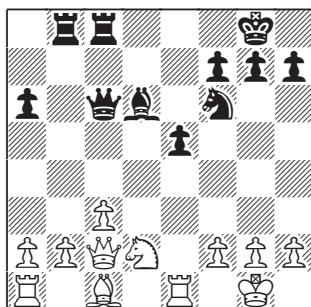
One of the most difficult questions arises, when, after having completed development and connected the Rooks, a decision must be made which

Rook to play to which square. Ragozin decides to put his Rooks on b8 and c8, to keep White's queenside majority under pressure.

Although Black finally manages to generate dangerous attacking play this way, I still believe it would have been better to put the King's Rook on e8, keeping the option open of developing the other Rook to the b-, c- or d-file, depending on White's set-up. I think Black should have played 16...e4, and on 17 ♖e1, continued 17...♖fc8. One of the main points is that Black threatens to bring his Knight to d3 via g4 and e5. In this way, Black could have gotten full compensation for his pawn.

17 ♖c2      ♖ab8  
18 ♖e1      ...

White prepares for 19 ♗e4, after which he would be a healthy pawn up, with Black having no visible compensation. Black must come up with something extraordinary now.



18 ...      ♖b4!

And here it is! With this spectacular Rook move, Black not only stops 19 ♗e4, he also threatens to assume an attacking position on the Kingside. Botvinnik must have been confused by this sudden turn of events, since he plays the rest of the game with a less steady hand than usual.

19 c4      ...

An understandable decision. White cuts the Black Rook off from the Kingside. Still, this is not White's best, since he has to lose another



tempo to support the c-pawn and apart from that, he has surrendered the square d4, enabling Black to build up an attack that is just sufficient for a draw.

Alternatives were: (a) 19 ♖f1 ♜g4 20 ♗e3 ♜g6 21 ♚f5 ♛c5 22 g3 ♗e4 and Black develops a dangerous attack; (b) 19 h3!. With this little move, White prevents the black Rook from taking up a threatening position on the Kingside. It is important to note that 19...♜h4 20 ♗f3 ♜xh3 does not work because of 21 ♗x5.

It seems hard for Black to prove that he has real compensation for the pawn.

**19 ... ♛c5**

The Bishop aims for the ideal square d4.

**20 b3 ♗g4**  
**21 ♗e4 ♛d4**  
**22 ♜b1 ...**

Again an obvious move, but again not the best. For tactical reasons, the Rooks is not well positioned on b1. After 22 ♛d2, so as to play the Rook to c1, Black has to play accurately to maintain the balance. The following long variation is practically forced: 22...♜b7 23 ♜ac1 f5 24 h3 fxe4 25 hxg4 ♜f7 26 ♗e3 ♜df8 27 ♗xd4 exd4 28 ♚xe4 ♚xe4 29 ♜xe4 ♜xf2 30 ♜xd4 ♜xa2 31 ♜f1 ♜e8 32 g5 g6 and the double-rook ending is just tenable for Black, although his task is still difficult. It is quite possible that Botvinnik saw this long line and rejected it, hoping for more. In that case, he would have underestimated Black's looming attacking chances.

**22 ... ♚g6**

Black takes advantage of the unprotected position of the white Queen. White must take time out to protect the f-pawn.

**23 ♖e2 f5**

The Black offensive is gaining momentum; White now has to be on his guard.

**24 ♗a3 ...**

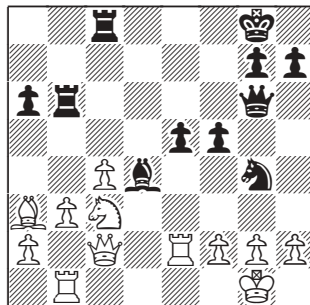
Too risky. White's only move was 24 ♖g3, hitting the f-pawn and keeping the Queen from h5. Black then has the following choices: (a) 24...e4. This push fails for tactical reasons after 25 ♖d2! And now 25...♖cxc4 26 ♗a3! and 27 fxe3 ♖h6 28 ♖f1 leads Black nowhere; (b) 24...f4! 25 ♖xg6 hxg6 26 ♖e4 ♖cc4. At first glance, Black has a slight plus because of the dominant position of his Bishop. With accurate play, however, White can undermine the stranglehold: 27 ♗a3 ♖b6 28 ♗b2 ♖c7 29 h3, leading to a drawish position.

**24 ... ♖b6!**

The best retreat, as will soon be clear.

**25 ♖c3 ...**

From an objective standpoint, the alternative 25 ♖g3 was still the better option, but from a practical standpoint, the text move, leading to total chaos on the board, can hardly be condemned in view of the impending time pressure. After 25 ♖g3 f4 26 ♖xg6 ♖xg6 (now it is clear why Black's 24<sup>th</sup> move was so strong!) 27 ♖e4 f3! and now 28 gxf3 ♖xf2+ 29 ♖g3 ♖e4+ followed by 30...♖c3 and Black wins the exchange. Since White would still have compensation in the form of one pawn and a queenside majority, the outcome of the game would not be entirely clear.



**25 ... ♖×h2!**

A hammer blow. White cannot take the Knight as he would be mated after 26 ♖×h2 ♔h5+ 27 ♖g1 ♖h6.

**26 ♗d5 ...**

The best tactical try. White does not try to defend, but creates counter-threats that are not easy to parry in time pressure.

**26 ... ♗f3+**

Forcing the King to f1.

**27 ♖f1 ♔h5**

Another powerful move. Black does not bother with the check on e7, since he has mating threats.

**28 ♖e3! ...**

Botvinnik has apparently underestimated Black's attack for some time, but now with a dagger at his throat, he finds the best fighting chance. White was threatened with mate, and therefore he had to vacate the square e2 for his King.

**28 ... ♗×e3?**

An automatic reaction, after which White can save himself with pointed play. Instead, with 28...♖×c4!, Black could have placed insurmountable problems before his opponent. The Rook cannot be taken for obvious reasons, so either the Queen has to move or he must check on e7. With five pieces hanging, there is total chaos on the board. The following variations should clarify matters:

(a) 29 ♖d3 ♗×e3 30 f×e3 ♖g4! 31 ♗e7+ ♖f7 32 ♖d5+ ♖e6 and Black has a winning attack; (b) 29 ♗e7+ forcing the King to h8, but the

drawback is that Black's Rook on b6 is no longer under attack. Black gets the upper hand by means of 29...♖h8 30 ♗d1 ♕h2+ 31 ♖g1 ♕g4 32 ♜h3 ♗g5 and now 33 bxc4 loses to 33...♕xf2.

29 fxe3 ♜xc4  
30 ♕e7+! ...

Forcing the King to h8.

30 ... ♖h8  
31 ♗d3 ...

Now the difference becomes clear. The d-file is open, giving White just enough counterplay.

31 ... ♜b8  
32 ♜d1 ...

Draw agreed. Black has to force a perpetual by 32...♗h1+ 33 ♖f2 ♗h4+. White, in turn, cannot escape the perpetual, since 34 ♖e2 ♕d4+! is clearly in Black's favor.

**(15) Botvinnik-Ragozin, March 11, 1941** 1 d4 ♕f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♕c3 e5 4 ♕f3 ♕bd7 5 g3 g6 6 ♗g2 ♗g7 7 O-O O-O 8 e4 ♜e8 9 ♗e3 exd4 10 ♕xd4 c6 11 h3 ♕b6 12 b3 d5 13 exd5 cxd5 14 c5 ♕bd7 15 ♕db5 ♕e4 16 ♕xd5 ♕dxc5 17 ♜c1 ♕a6 18 ♕bc7 ♕xc7 19 ♕xc7 ♕c3 20 ♗xd8 ♜xd8 21 ♕xa8 1-0

**(16) Botvinnik-Ragozin, March 14, 1941**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

1 d4	d5
2 c4	e6
3 ♕c3	♕f6
4 ♗g5	♗e7
5 ♕f3	h6
6 ♗xf6	♗xf6

7 ♔d3 ...

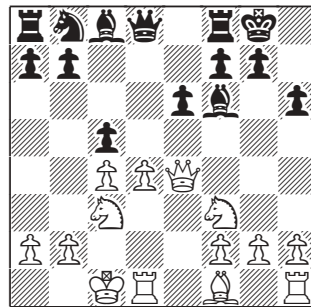
A new move that still has not been tried in tournament practice, except in a rapid game Timman-Belyavsky, Frankfurt 1998. At the time, I knew about the present game and wanted to test it out. Belyavsky took on c4, after which White's queen move has no independent value, since this could have arisen after 7 ♔b3. This is not the only transposition; there will be a crucial transposition later in the game that can also be reached from a different move order, as we shall see.

7 ...           O-O  
 8 e4           dxe4  
 9 ♔xe4       c5

The standard way to attack White's pawn center.

10 O-O-O ...

The cards are on the table. All the ingredients for a sharp struggle are there...



10 ...           cxd4

It would probably have been better to have kept the tension. I give two recent alternatives from this position (reached in both cases via the move order 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♙e7 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♙g5 0-0 6 ♖c2 h6 7 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 8 e4, etc.): (a) 10... ♗a5 11 ♙d3 ♖d8 12 ♗h7+ ♕f8 13 ♘e4 and White already had a strong attack (Gaprindashvili-Mil[?], Dubai 1986; (b) 10... ♘c6 11 d5 ♘d4 12 ♙d3 g6 13 h4 h5 14 ♘g5 and a draw was agreed in Alalik-Sten [?] Budapest 1991.

This last example probably presents the solution to Black's opening

problems. By putting more pressure on d4, Black gets enough counterplay. It is important to note that the direct assault 11 ♖d3 g6 12 ♗e5, with the idea of taking on g6, does not achieve anything because of 12...♙×d4.

The text move has a distinct disadvantage. By surrendering the center, Black may soon get pressed on the Queenside. The Knight jumping into b5 may become especially annoying.

**11 ♗×d4 ♖b6**  
**12 ♖d3 ♗d8**

A tough decision. Black lets White Queen into h7, hoping to generate counterplay along the d-file. The alternative, 12...g6, was also insufficient to solve Black's problems. White quickly continues with 13 ♖c2 and now: (a) 13...♗c6 14 ♗a4! ♙a5 15 ♗×c6 b×c6 16 h4 and White has a free attack; (b) 13...♗d8 14 ♗db5 a6 15 ♗a4 ♙c6 16 ♗×d8+ ♖×d8 17 ♗d1 with a clear edge for White.

**13 ♗b3! ...**

A very strong move. White does not enter h7 immediately, since after 13 ♙h7+ ♗f8 14 ♗b3, Black has 14...♙×f2! at his disposal. After 15 ♗hf1 ♙e3+ 16 ♗b1 ♗c6 17 ♗d5 e×d5 18 ♗de1 ♙×e1 19 ♗×e1 ♗e5 Black has nothing to fear. White's attack has come to a standstill, while Black's pieces cooperate quite well. Now White has the double threat of 14 ♙h7+ and 14 c5 restricting Black's movement on the Queenside. Ragozin decides to prevent the latter threat.

**13 ... ♗d7**

Under these circumstances, 13...♙×f2 was obviously too dangerous, because of 14 ♗hf1.

**14 ♙h7+ ♗f8**  
**15 ♗he1 ...**

White continues to build up his attack. The direct threat is 16 ♗d5, so Black has to cover the e-file.

15 ... ♖e5

The only move.

16 c5 ...

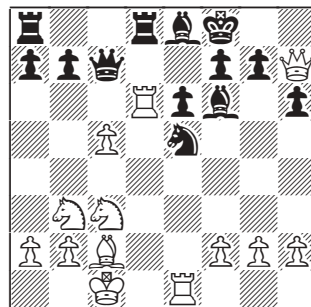
With this push, White tightens his grip on the position. Black has to retreat with his Queen, since after 16... ♗xd3+ 17 ♖xd3 ♗c7 18 ♘d5! White wins the exchange. This theme - with Knight jumps to d5 - continues to play an important role in the game.

16 ... ♕c7  
17 ♗c2 ♗d7  
18 ♖d6! ...

The introduction to an absolutely brilliant combination. Other moves would not improve White's attack, for example, 18 f4 ♗g6 and the square h8 is covered.

18 ... ♕e8

After 18... ♗c6 White would strengthen his position by 19 ♘d4. The text move has a different drawback.



19 ♘d5!! ...

Wonderful play. By first sacrificing the Knight, White opens up the road to Black's King. [?] means would have been less convincing. After 19 ♘e4, Black could have reacted with 19... ♖e7, staying out of danger.

19 ... e×d5  
20 ♖×f6! ...

The point of the previous move. By sacrificing even more material, White peels back the protection around the enemy King.

**20 ... gxf6**  
**21 ♖xh6+ ♜e7**  
**22 f4 ...**

The result of White's combination can be seen now. He is going to win back material, while at the same time opening up Black's King's position.

**22 ... d4**

Desperately looking for counterplay.

**23 fxe5? ...**

An incomprehensible mistake. White was in no hurry to take the Knight. He could have continued with the calm 23 ♖h4!, keeping his opponent in the box. Black's only defensive try is 23...♞d5, trying to protect himself. After 24 ♙e4, White's attack is decisive, as can be seen in the following variations: (a) 24...♞xc5+ 25 ♜b1! ♞b5 26 ♘xd4 and the White Knight jumps to f5 with devastating effect; (b) 24...♞ad8 25 ♙xd5 ♞xd5 26 ♞f1! With an irresistible attack.

**23 ... fxe5**

Now the situation is totally unclear, since Black has the defensive move f7-f6, maintaining a natural pawn cover for his King.

**24 ♙e4 ...**

Another mistake. Botvinnik must have been in serious time pressure around here. The text move serves no visible purpose at all. White should have aimed at the weakest spot in the enemy camp, the square f6.

After 24 ♖h4+ f6 25 ♞f1 ♜c6, White has the following choices: (a) 26 ♙e4 just loses time, because of 26...♜e6, threatening a check on c4; (b) 26 ♘d2, with the aim of bringing the Knight to e4 and putting even



more pressure on the f-pawn. Black can just survive by 26...♙f7 27 ♖e4 ♜h8 28 ♚f2 (exchanging Queens would clearly favor Black) 28...♜h6 and on 29 ♗d6, Black has 29...♙e6; (c) 26 g4! The most forceful and best try. White has the very straightforward threat of 27 g5. Black's best is now 27...d3! 28 ♙×d3 ♙f7, a pawn sacrifice to win time organizing the defense. After 29 ♙e4 ♚e6 30 ♜b1 ♜h8 31 ♚g3 the resulting position is hard to judge. White has full compensation for the exchange in any case.

**24 ...            a5!**

A key move, both for defensive purposes (bringing the Rook to a6) and for offensive purposes (pushing the a-pawn farther). White is left with no time to reinforce his attack.

**25 g4            ...**

Under the present circumstances, ineffective.

**25 ...            ♜a6**  
**26 ♚h4+        f6**  
**27 g5            a4**  
**28 ♚h7+        ...**

A better fighting chance would have been 28 g×f6+, after which Black would have had to play accurately to win: 28...♜×f6 29 ♜f1 ♜dd6! 30 ♜b1 ♜a6 31 ♙d3 ♚c6! 32 ♙×a6 ♙g6+ 33 ♜a1 b×a6 and now 34 ♗a5 is countered by 34...♚f7!. Black's powerful passed central pawns guarantee him a smooth victory.

**28 ...            ♙f7**  
**29 g6            ♜f8**  
**30 g×f7        a×b3 0-1**

White resigned. A sad end to a game that could have been one of Botvinnik's most brilliant victories in his entire career.

**(17) Botvinnik-Ragozin, March 15, 1941** 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♗b5 ♗d4 5 ♗a4 ♗c5 6 d3 O-O 7 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 8 ♗e2 d5 9 ♗xd4 exd4 10 f3 ♗d6 11 O-O dx e4 12 fx e4 ♗g4 13 ♗f4 ♗e7 14 h3 ♗e5 15 ♗h5 ♗g6 16 ♗g3 ♗e6 17 ♗b3 c5 18 ♗d5 ♗ad8 19 ♗ae1 ♗xd5 20 exd5 ♗d7 21 d6 f5 22 ♗h2 b6 23 g4 f4 24 ♗d5+ ♗f7 25 ♗e6 ♗fe8 26 ♗xe8+ ♗xe8 27 ♗xf7+ ♗xf7 28 ♗xf4 ♗e2 29 ♗g3+ ♗e6 30 ♗f2 ♗xf2 31 ♗xf2 ♗f8 32 c4 ♗d7 33 ♗f4 ♗b8 34 ♗f3 ♗c6 35 ♗e4 ♗b4 36 a3 ♗c2 37 h4 a5 38 a4 ♗b4 39 h5 ♗c6 40 ♗g3 ♗b4 41 ♗e5 g6 42 ♗g3 ♗c6 43 ♗f4 ♗d7 44 b3 ♗e6 45 ♗g3 ♗b4 46 ♗f4 ♗c6 1/2

**(18) Botvinnik-Ragozin, May 11, 1944**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

<b>1 d4</b>	<b>d5</b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>e6</b>
<b>3 ♗c3</b>	<b>♗f6</b>
<b>4 ♗f3</b>	<b>♗e7</b>
<b>5 ♗g5</b>	<b>O-O</b>
<b>6 e3</b>	<b>h6</b>
<b>7 ♗xf6</b>	<b>♗xf6</b>
<b>8 ♗c1</b>	<b>...</b>

This time Botvinnik chooses a modern set-up against the Tartakower.

<b>8 ...</b>	<b>c6</b>
<b>9 h4</b>	<b>...</b>

But this is highly unusual. (The normal move, also played in the Kasparov-Karpov matches, is 9 ♗d3.) Pushing the kingside pawns is normally combined with the development of the Queen to c2, followed by castling queenside. Still, the text move is known in a slightly different version. In a correspondence game Katirsovich-Gulbis [?] 1989/90, there followed 9 ♗d3 ♗d7 10 cxd5 exd5 11 h4 ♗e8 12 g4 ♗f8 13 g5 h×g5 14 h×g5 ♗×g5 15 ♗e5 ♗e6 16 ♗f3 with a strong attack.

In the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* 11...h6 is recommended as an improvement. I'm not so sure this is so good after 12 h5 g5 13 ♗f5.

A position has arisen that is similar to one later in this game, with the difference that White has not committed himself to the weakening g2-g4. Therefore Black should play 12...g6! after White has pushed his g-pawn and by transposition, gets the same position as Ragozin later on.

**9 ...            ♖d7**  
**10 g4            ...**

It is interesting to speculate whether Botvinnik would have used the same hyper-sharp strategy in tournament play, where he was normally playing solidly.

**10 ...            g6**

Standard and good. Black takes the sting out of the push g4-g5.

**11 cxd5        ...**

An interesting moment. White dissolves the tension in order to determine his plans for the near future. If Black takes back with the c-pawn, then the position will be closed and White can focus on a kingside attack. If Black recaptures with the e-pawn, then White will aim for a strategic struggle.

**11 ...            exd5**

The right choice. It turns out that Black has nothing to fear in the upcoming strategic fight.

**12 h5            ...**

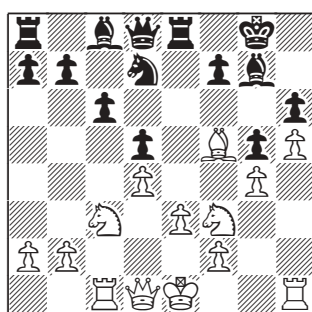
The consequence of the previous move. Black is forced to give up the f5-square.

**12 ...            g5**  
**13 ♗d3          ♗g7**  
**14 ♗f5            ...**

White has occupied the weak square, but the question remains whether he can keep it. Black will soon maneuver his Knight to d6, challenging White's temporary positional grip.

14 ... ♖e8

Active play. Black prevents the enemy's strategic plans, starting with 15 ♗d2.



15 ♗f1 ...

An indecisive move, after which White will have to surrender the f5-square. In keeping with White's strategy was 15 ♗e2, in order to give the Bishop on f5 sufficient support. Subsequently White should be ready to sacrifice a pawn. In fact, Black has the choice of which pawn to offer: After 15... ♗a5+ 16 ♗d2 ♗xa2 17 ♗g3 White can be reasonably satisfied. He has a firm grip on the kingside, compensating fully for the loss on the queenside.

15... ♗f6 is more critical. White has to follow up with 16 ♗g3. After 16... ♗xg4, it is not entirely clear how White should continue. Black's position is solid enough to withstand direct attacks. White will probably have to play 17 ♗f1, slowly building up the pressure.

It is understandable that Botvinnik did not go in for this! He has never been known to gamble pawns, especially not such a crucial pawn on g4; without the g-pawn, White's grip on the kingside is less secure in the long term. It would be more fitting to the style of a modern giant like Kasparov.

15 ... Nb6

Now Black is sure that White will not be able to keep the crucial f5-square.

16 ♖d2 ...

White adjusts his strategy. White gives up the fight for the f5-square and is ready to occupy it with a pawn that he will be able to defend. In other words, he is converting an offensive strategy into a defensive one.

16 ... ♕xf5  
17 gxf5 ♖c8  
18 ♖e2 ♕f8

A curious case: Square d6 is in general reserved for the Black Knight, but Black first occupies it with his Bishop, in order to challenge the enemy Knight that is going to appear on g3.

19 ♖g2 ♕d6  
20 ♖f1 ...

Careful play. White only wants to post a Knight on g3 if he can keep it there.

20 ... ♖f6  
21 ♖d3 ♕c7

The game is entering a maneuvering phase. Black vacates the square d6 for the Knight, while the Black Bishop can be used later on the queenside.

22 f3 ...

A very ambitious move. White is readying himself to build up a pawn center by e3-e4 and meanwhile is envisaging a plan to bring a Knight to g4. The course of the game shows that his plan is too ambitious, but at this moment this was hard to foresee.

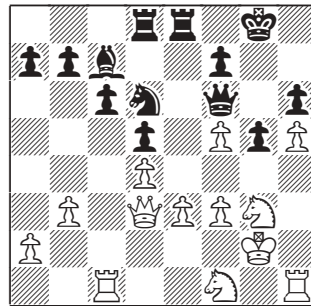
22 ... ♖d6

Black just continues his strategic plan.

23 ♗eg3 ♜ad8

A restrained reaction. Black's move seeks to prevent e3-e4, while on the other hand, he hopes to meet White's other plan by sharp tactical means.

24 b3 ...



White is hesitating again, allowing Black to assume the initiative. The crucial try was 24 ♗h2. The following variation may show why Botvinnik thought better of it: 24... ♗c4 25 ♗g4 ♜d6 26 ♗f1 (in order to protect e3) 26... ♗xb2 27 ♜b1 ♗c4 and now the straightforward 28 f6 is met by 28... ♗xe3+! 29 ♗gx3 ♜xe3 with a strong attacking position. This means that White must overprotect the e-pawn by 28 ♜d3, after which Black continues with 28...b5 29 f5 ♜f8. The result is that White is a pawn down for unclear compensation. White has built up an attacking position, but there is no follow up. Therefore White tries to cover the c4-square first, but now Black seizes the initiative.

24 ... ♗g4!

Very well played. If White takes the pawn by 25 f×g4, then 25... ♗e4 is a powerful reply. Therefore White has to keep the position as closed as possible (especially closing down the scope of the Black Bishop).

**25 f4      ♖h8**

A maneuvering phase is starting [?] again. Black just has to make sure that his g-pawn will never be taken. Apart from that he has positional assets: Control over square e4, pressure against e3 and, because of these factors, potential play on the queenside. It is important for him to keep all the minor pieces on the board, since White's Knights cannot do much more than protect each other.

**26 ♖c2      ♖e7**  
**27 ♖g1      ♖de8**  
**28 ♖hh2      ♗b6**  
**29 ♖h1      ♗c7**  
**30 ♖hg2      ♖g8**  
**31 ♖g1      ♗b6**  
**32 ♖h1      ♘e4**  
**33 ♖g1      ♘d6**  
**34 ♖h1      a6**

The first pawn move in ten moves and the first sign that Black is ready to undertake action on the queenside. White has to continue to play waiting moves.

**35 ♖h2      ♗a7**  
**36 ♖hg2      ♘e4**

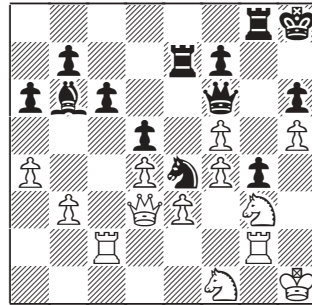
This is the second time the Knight has jumped to this square. In general, Black is not interested in the exchange of the Knights, since this would relieve the pressure on White. The point is that White cannot exchange Knights on e4, since he will lose the pawn on f5. Thus Black is able to increase the pressure by keeping the Knight on the central outpost.

**37 a4      ...**

Suddenly White throws in an active move that neither strengthens nor weakens his position. From a psychological point of view, it indicates that Botvinnik is not ready to lie down and wait.

**37 ...      ♗b6**

An unfortunate move that allows White to create sufficient counterplay by sacrificing a pawn. Black should have played for the push c6-c5, increasing the scope of the Bishop. To this end, 37...♖d8 was a good move.



38 ♖×e4! ...

From this point on, Botvinnik plays with full energy and a tremendous feel for the initiative.

38 ... d×e4  
39 ♖c3 ♖×f5

Otherwise White would protect the f5-pawn by 40 ♖g3, after which he has no weaknesses left.

40 d5+ ♖h7  
41 ♖b4! ...

The tactical point of White's 38<sup>th</sup> move. The Black Bishop is forced to retreat to a passive square.

41 ... ♖d8  
42 d×c6 ...

White is not worried about his h-pawn, since he will use the half-open h-file as an attacking base.

42 ... ♖×h5+



43 ♖h2 ♔a5

Black wisely seeks the exchange of Queens. The centralizing move 43...♔d5 had a tactical drawback. After 44 ♖d2, Black cannot play 44...♔xc6? because of 45 ♖xd8, winning a piece.

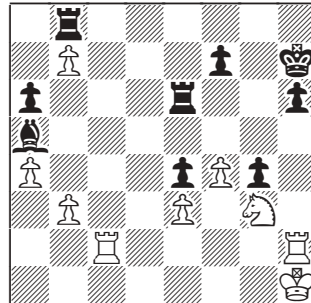
44 ♔xa5 ♕xa5  
45 ♘g3 ...

Again that tremendous feel for the initiative. The Knight is aiming for the vital square f5.

45 ... ♖e6?

A panicky move. Black is defending against the threat of 46 ♘f5, but meanwhile loses all control on the queenside. Indicated was 45...♖c7 in order to play the other rook to e6. In that case the game would be balanced after 46 ♖h5! ♕b6 47 ♘f5 ♖e6 48 cxb7 ♖xb7 49 ♖ch2 winning back the pawn.

46 cxb7 ♖b8



47 b4! ...

Wreaking havoc in the enemy camp.

47 ... ♕b6

After 47...♕xb6 48 ♖c7 all White's pieces cooperate very well together. But after the text move, the situation gets even worse.

48 a5	♙×e3
49 ♖c7	♗f6
50 ♗hc2	...

Now White's queenside pawns decide. On 50...♙×f4, White has the decisive blow 51 ♖h5.

50 ...	♗×f4
51 b5	♗f6
52 ♔g2	...

With this quiet King move White underscores his superiority. There is no need to hurry matters.

52 ...	a×b5
53 ♖×e4	♗e6
54 ♖c5	...

Forcing a completely winning double-Rook ending.

54 ...	♙×c5
55 ♗2×c5	b4
56 ♗b5	♔g6
57 ♗c8	1-0

Black resigned. An intriguing and tough game, showing Ragozin's skills in the early middlegame and Botvinnik's unremitting fighting spirit in the final phase.

### **(19) Ragozin-Botvinnik, May 15, 1944**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

The first game with White for Ragozin after five consecutive games with Black.

1 e4	e6
2 d4	d5
3 ♖c3	...

In game 10 Ragozin opted for the Tarrasch variation. Now he's ready to face Botvinnik's favorite line: The Winawer.

<b>3 ...</b>	<b>♙b4</b>
<b>4 e5</b>	<b>c5</b>
<b>5 a3</b>	<b>♙xc3+</b>
<b>6 bxc3</b>	<b>♗e7</b>
<b>7 ♗f3</b>	<b>...</b>

The quiet, positional approach, still quite popular these days. Soon afterwards, during the 13<sup>th</sup> USSR Championship (which started just five days after this game was played), Smyslov played 7 a4 against Botvinnik. This famous game continued 7...♗c6 8 ♗f3 ♙a5 9 ♗d2 c4 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗h3 ♗g6 (keeping the Knight from f4) and now the modern move 12 ♗e2 would have given White an edge (instead of Smyslov's 12 ♗f3). The text move very often transposes to the 7 a4 line.

<b>7 ...</b>	<b>♙a5</b>
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Deviating from Kan-Botvinnik, in which Black first played 7...♗bc6. After the further moves 8 a4 ♗d7 9 ♗a3 cxd4 10 cxd4 ♙a5+ 11 ♙d2 ♙xd2+ 12 ♙xd2 ♗f5 13 ♖b1 b6 14 c3 ♗a5 15 ♗b4 ♗c4+ 16 ♗xc4 dxc4 17 a5 ♗c6 18 ♗e1 f6 19 exf6 gxf6 20 f3 ♖g8 21 ♙e2 ♙d7 22 ♖a1, a draw was agreed.

According to modern theory, White can only hope for an advantage in the endgame if he can manage to bring his Bishop to c3, supported by the King on d2. Only that way can Black's Queen Knight be kept from a5.

<b>8 ♙d2</b>	<b>...</b>
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It is still an undecided matter whether White should protect the c3-pawn with his Queen or his Bishop. The text move is more in keeping with the general idea of the Winawer, aiming to develop the Queen's Bishop to a3. The alternative, 8 ♗d2, has been favored by Spassky. White avoids all endgames and is ready to push the c3-pawn.

**8 ...            ♖bc6**  
**9 ♗e2           ♗d7**  
**10 a4            ...**

Now a well known theoretical position has arisen.

**10 ...           ♖c8**

Quite a modern move. Until now, it was assumed that this move was first played in Foldy-Portisch, Hungary 1959, fifteen years after the present game!

The main idea of the development of the Rook is that Black is ready for the endgame after 11...cxd4 12 cxd4 ♖xd2+ 13 ♗xd2 ♗f5 and now 14 ♗d2 is impossible because of 14...♗xe5, winning a pawn.

**11 O-O        ...**

Other theoretical tries are 11 ♗a3 (leading to positions similar to Kan-Botvinnik), 11 ♗d3 and 11 dxc5, of which the last move is considered to be the main one, based on a game Smyslov-Uhlmann, Mar del Plata 1966. The text leads to an approximately even endgame.

**11 ...           cxd4**  
**12 cxd4        ...**

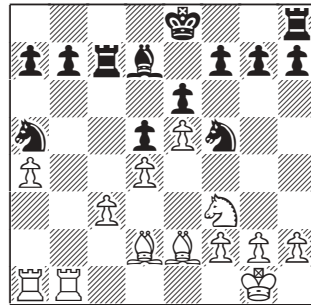
An interesting try is 12 ♖g5, sacrificing the queenside pawns for attacking chances. A correspondence game Shokov-Kubrasov 1975 continued 12...♖xc3 13 ♖a3 ♖xc2 14 ♗d3 ♖c5 15 ♖xg7 ♖g8 16 ♖h7 ♗b4 17 ♗g5! ♗xd3 18 ♖xd3 ♗xa4 19 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 20 ♗g5 with a dangerous attack. Black would have done better to play 16...0-0-0 (instead of 16...♗b4) after which the game is unclear. There is a parallel with the line 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♗e7 7 ♖g4 ♖c7 8 ♖xg7 ♖g8 9 ♖xh7 cxd4 that leads to equally sharp play.

**12 ...           ♖xd2**

13 ♗×d2    ♖f5  
 14 c3      ♖a5

As I stated before: When the Black Knight reaches a5, Black has a comfortable endgame. It is very instructive to see how Botvinnik turns it into a win, without his opponent making any visible mistakes.

15 ♖fb1    ♖c7



Not an easy choice. The alternative was 15...b6 to give the Rook freedom of movement. The drawback would be that if the Knight is going to be played to c4, White will have the chance to break with a4-a5. Therefore Botvinnik keeps the pawn on b7, avoiding any targets on the queenside.

16 ♗c1    ...

A good maneuver. White brings his Bishop to the a3-f8 diagonal where it is most active.

16 ...    f6

With the main idea of vacating the square f7 for the King and connecting the Rooks.

17 ♗a3    h5

Another useful pawn move. If Black had played 17...♖f7 without further thought, White could have caused trouble by chasing away both Knights: 18 ♗b4 ♖c4 19 g4, followed by 20 ♗d6 and the Black b-pawn falls.

**18 ♖b4 ...**

Challenging the Knight and thus gaining more space. Alternatives were:  
(a) 18 ♖c5. With the idea of 18...b6 19 ♖b4 ♗c4 20 a5 b5 21 a6 followed by 22 ♖c5 and White has some pressure. A more accurate defense is 18...♔f7 19 ♖xa7 ♖xc3 20 ♖c5 ♖a8 with enough counterplay. (b) 18 h3. Preparing the push of the g-pawn. Black must be careful, since 18...♔f7 19 ♖b4 ♗c4 20 g4 leads to trouble again. Also 18 ♖c6 is not fully satisfactory in view of 19 ♖c5 b6 20 ♖b4. Black's best option is probably 18...b4, keeping control on the kingside.

**18 ... ♗c4**  
**19 a5 ♖c6**  
**20 ♖c5 a6**

The situation on the queenside has now stabilized, so both sides now turn their attention to the center.

**21 ♖d3 ♔f7**  
**22 ♖e1 ♖e8**  
**23 ♖ab1 ♖b5**  
**24 h3 ...**

Still a useful move.

**24 ... ♗e7**

The logical follow-up to the previous move. The Knight is on its way to c6, putting pressure on White's a-pawn.

**25 ♖xc4 ...**

Sooner or later unavoidable. By executing the exchange at this moment, White prepares sharp action aiming to conquer space on the queenside.

**25 ... ♖xc4**  
**26 ♖d6 ...**

Forcing the black Rook to leave the c-file.

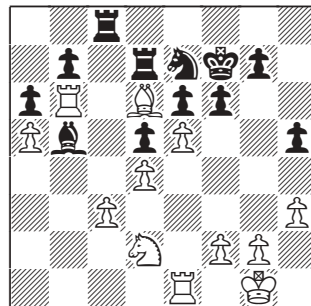
26 ... ♖d7  
27 ♘d2 ...

And now White is threatening to exchange both pairs of minor pieces after which he could exert pressure against b7.

27 ... ♜c8

Preparing to take back with the Rook on c4.

28 ♜b6 ♙b5



29 e×f6 ...

To this point, both players have conducted the strategical struggle very well. With the text move, White loses his way. Indicated was the consistent 29 ♘b3, aiming for c5. After the forced variation 29...♜×c3 30 ♘c5 ♜×c5 31 ♙×c5 ♘c8 32 ♜×b5 a×b5 33 e×f6 g×f6 34 ♜b1, a draw is imminent.

29 ... g×f6  
30 ♙b4 ♜c6

Black takes over the initiative. First of all he forces White to exchange his active Rook.

31 ♜×c6 ...

The alternative 31 ♖b3 looked more attractive at first sight but the position after 31...♗x6 32 a×b6 ♕d7! 33 ♖c5 is deceptive. The Knight on c5 looks very active, but Black has a simple plan to attack White's weak b-pawn by the maneuver ♖e7-f5-d6-c4. White can only wait and see, while Black, who has protected his weaknesses permanently, will take over.

**31 ... ♖×c6**  
**32 f4 ...**

The best try. Again 32 ♖b3 did not work so well, this time because of 32...e5 33 ♖c5 e×d4 34 ♖×b7 ♗b8 and 35 ♖d6+ is simply met by 35...♙g6. With the text move, White stops the push e6-e5.

**32 ... ♖×b4**  
**33 c×b4 ♗c7**

Crystal-clear play. With his active Bishop and control over the c-file, Black has the better chances. Still, White can create just about enough counterplay to hold the position.

**34 ♖b3 ♗c4**

Winning a pawn.

**35 ♖c5 ♗×d4**

Of course, this pawn has to be taken, since after 35...♗×b4 36 ♖×e6, the White d-pawn would be protected.

**36 ♗×e6 ♗×b4**

Again, Botvinnik takes the right pawn. After 36...♗×f4 37 ♗×b6 ♗b4 38 ♗×b7+ ♙g6, White would take one more pawn by 39 ♖×a6.

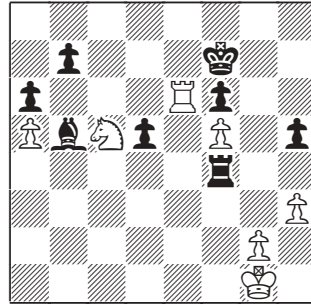
**37 f5! ...**

The best way to fight. In order to take the f-pawn, Black must now play



his Rook to a less active square.

37 ... ♖f4



38 ♖b6? ...

But this is a clear mistake. White should have played 38 ♖xb7 ♖xf5 39 ♖d8+. Both after 39...♗g6 40 ♖d6 and 39...♗f8 40 ♖c6, he can keep the dangerous d-pawn from running. His pieces would be placed actively enough to hold the game.

38 ... ♖xf5  
39 ♖xb7+ ♗g6

Now the situation is completely different. The Black d-pawn will reach d3, after which it will be extremely hard to stop.

40 ♖b6 ...

Going for the a-pawn, but this eventually leads to a hopeless Rook-versus-Knight ending. Alternatives were equally insufficient.

40 ... d4  
41 ♖xa6 d3  
42 ♖c7 ...

After 42 ♖d6, Black wins immediately by 42...♗xa6 43 ♖xa6 ♖d5 and the d-pawn promotes.

42 ...	d2
43 ♖d6	♗f1+
44 ♜h2	d1=♜
45 ♖×d1	♖×d1
46 ♗×b5	♗d5
47 ♗c3	♖×a5

The win is now elementary. The fact that Black has isolated pawns does not make the process more complicated.

48 ♗e2	♜f5
49 ♜g3	♖a3+
50 ♜h4	♖a2
51 g4+	...

Or 51 ♗g3+ ♜e5 followed by 52...♖×g2 and the f-pawn decides.

51 ...	♜e5!
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More accurate than 51...h×g4 52 h×g4 ♜e5 after which White would have the defense 53 ♗g1 followed by 53 ♗g3. Now 52 ♗g1 is met by 52...♖g2 53 ♗f3+ ♜f4 and wins.

52 ♗c1	♖c2
53 ♗d3+	♜e4
54 ♗b4	♖c4 0-1

White resigned. A very clear game by Botvinnik.

**(20) Ragozin-Botvinnik, May 16, 1945** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 d5 4 ♗f3 ♗g7 5 ♜a4+ c6 6 c×d5 ♗×d5 7 e4 ♗c7 8 ♗e3 ♗d7 9 ♗e2 ♗b6 10 ♜c2 O-O 11 O-O f5 12 ♖ad1 f×e4 13 ♜×e4 ♗cd5 14 ♜h4 ♗×e3 15 f×e3 e5 16 ♜×d8 ♖×d8 17 ♗×e5 ♗×e5 18 d×e5 ♗e6 19 ♖d4 ♖d7 20 ♗e4 ♖e7 21 b3 ♜g7 22 ♗c5 ♖ae8 23 e4 ♗c8 24 ♗d3 ♗d7 25 ♗g4 ♗f8 26 ♗×c8 ♖×c8 27 h4 ♖ce8 28 h5 ♗d7 29 h×g6 h×g6 30 ♖d6 ♗×e5 31 ♖ff6 ♖f7 32 ♖×f7+ ♜×f7 33 ♗×e5+ ♖×e5 34 ♖d7+ ♖e7 35 ♖d4 ♜e6 36 ♜f2 ♖d7 37 ♖a4 a6 38 ♜e3

c5 39 ♖c4 ♖c7 40 b4 b6 41 bxc5 bxc5 42 ♟f4 ♟f6 43 e5+ ♟e6 44 ♟e4 g5 45 ♖c3 g4 46 ♖a3 ♖c6 47 ♖g3 ♖b6 48 a3 ♖b1 49 ♖xg4 ♖e1+ 50 ♟f4 ♟d5 51 ♖g6 ♖e4+ 52 ♟f3 ♖a4 53 e6 ♟d6 54 g4 a5 55 ♖f6 ♖xa3+ 56 ♟e4 ♖a1 57 e7+ ♟xe7 58 ♖a6 a4 59 ♟d3 ½-½

**(21) Ragozin-Botvinnik, May 25, 1945** 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 ♗e2 ♗g7 7 ♗e3 ♘c6 8 O-O O-O 9 ♘b3 ♗e6 10 f4 ♘a5 11 f5 ♗c4 12 ♗d3 ♗xd3 13 cxd3 ♘xb3 14 ♟xb3 ♘g4 15 ♗g5 h6 16 ♗h4 g5 17 ♗g3 ♟b6+ 18 ♟h1 ♟xb3 19 axb3 ♖fc8 20 ♖fc1 ♟f8 21 h3 ♘e5 22 ♘d5 ♘xd3 23 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 24 ♖xa7 ♗d4 25 ♖xb7 ♖c1+ 26 ♟h2 h5 27 f6 ♗g1+ 28 ♟h1 ♗c5+ 29 ♟h2 exf6 30 h4 ♗g1+ 31 ♟h1 ♘f2+ 32 ♗xf2 ♗xf2+ 33 ♟h2 gxh4 34 g3 ♗xg3+ 35 ♟g2 ♖c2+ 36 ♟f3 ♖f2+ 37 ♟e3 h3 38 ♖b8+ ♟g7 39 ♘e7 h2 40 ♖g8+ ♟h7 41 ♖xg3 ♖xb2 0-1

**(22) Ragozin-Botvinnik, July 12, 1946**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

<b>1 e4</b>	<b>e5</b>	
<b>2 ♘f3</b>	♘c6	
<b>3 ♗b5</b>		<b>a6</b>
<b>4 ♗a4</b>	♘f6	
<b>5 O-O</b>	♗e7	
<b>6 ♖e1</b>	<b>b5</b>	
<b>7 ♗b3</b>		<b>d6</b>
<b>8 c3</b>	<b>O-O</b>	
<b>9 h3</b>	♘d7	

The introduction to a rather passive system that has nevertheless been played by several top players, including Karpov, Petrosyan, Keres, Stein and Portisch. Black seeks to give his e-pawn extra protection, at the same time exerting pressure against d4. The drawback is that White is not hindered building a strong center. This game is the on time that Botvinnik used the system. He normally preferred the classical 9...♘a5, while he has also tried 9...♗e6.

<b>10 d4</b>	♗f6
<b>11 a4</b>	...

This is still one of the main moves. The other one is 11 ♖e3, giving the d-pawn extra protection and preparing to retreat the Bishop after 11... ♗a5 12 ♖c2 ♗c4 13 ♖c1.

**11 ... ♗a5**

Also a modern move. The alternative is 11... ♗b7.

**12 a×b5 ...**

A most remarkable and, at the same time, dubious decision. White gives up his King's Bishop in order to get control over the a-file. When I first saw this move, I thought that at that time, right after the Second World War, it was not generally known that it is, in practically all cases, a bad idea to let the King's Bishop be exchanged for a Knight. Further study, however, showed me that Ragozin had obtained the same position as Black

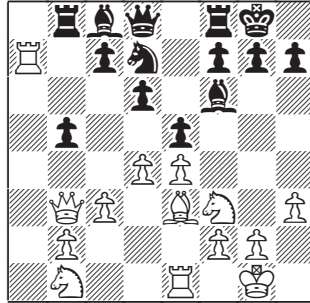
In Lilienthal-Ragozin, USSR Championship, 1945, there followed 12 ♖c2 b4 13 ♗bd2 b×c3 14 b×c3 c5 15 d5 ♗b6 16 ♗b3 ♗b7 17 ♗bd2 and now Ragozin avoided the repetition of moves by 17... ♗b8 and finally lost after 18 a5 ♗a8 19 ♗c4. This practical example is hard to understand. Did Ragozin really believe that Black was OK if he had repeated moves? It is quite likely that White would have played 18 ♖e2, instead of repeating moves, as he could have done two moves earlier. White seems to have a clear edge. Possibly Ragozin just wanted to vary in this training game.

**12 ... ♗×b3**  
**13 ♖×b3 ♗b8**

Getting out of the pin on the a-file, while pinning the pawn on b5.

**14 ♖e3 a×b5**  
**15 ♗a7 ...**

It looks like White is developing a strong initiative on the Queenside. Black's next move, however, is an adequate reply.



**15 ... c5!**

Gaining space on the Queenside and preparing a queen sortie to b6.

**16 d5 ...**

White is strategically forced to close the center, otherwise the black Bishop pair would become strong.

**16 ... ♖b6**  
**17 ♗a2 ♙b7**

Preparing to neutralize the pressure along the a-file.

**18 b4 ...**

The typical push in these kind of Ruy Lopez positions. White tries to keep as much influence on the Queenside as possible. His primary aim is not to exchange on e5, but to keep the tension.

**18 ... ♖a8**  
**19 ♖a3 ♗c7**

Now that the white Rook has been driven away from its active position, Black retreats with his Queen in order to get out of the pin.

**20 ♗b2 ...**

Not an ideal square for the Queen.

20 ... c4

A well known pawn structure. If White still had his King's Bishop (versus a black Knight), he would have a clear edge. Without the Bishop, his Kingside may become vulnerable, as the remainder of the game will show. At this moment the chances are approximately equal: Black has the pair of Bishops, while White has a slight space advantage.

21 ♖×a8 ♔×a8  
22 ♘a3 ♚b7!

This queen move is based upon a deep idea. Black has built up a battery of Queen and Bishop that at the moment seems to be aimless. Botvinnik however must have foreseen the turn that the game would take.

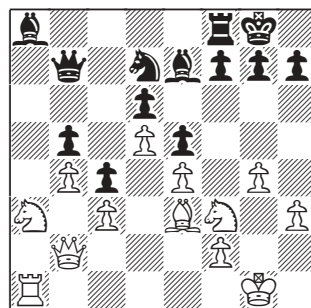
23 ♖a1 ...

White is apparently unaware of the danger that is looming. Otherwise he would not have played his Rook away from the Kingside. A careful move would have been 23 ♘d2, preparing to overprotect the center by f2-f3.

23 ... ♔e7

Now black is ready for the push f7-f5.

24 g4 ...



And White seems to prevent this. If now 24...g6, there follows 25 ♖h6, taking the sting out of Black's upcoming Kingside offensive. Black, in turn, has prepared a big surprise...

**24 ...            f5!!**

A very original pawn sacrifice. Black forces his opponent to take on f5, after which the upcoming Knight sacrifice on d5 becomes very strong. Much less convincing was 24...♗f6, since after 25 ♖d2 ♗×d5 26 e×d5 ♜×d5 27 f3 f5, White can keep the position closed by 28 g5! After 28...♗×g5 29 ♖e4 ♗e7 30 ♜e2 ♗c6 Black would have a fine position, but White would have managed to organize a defense.

**25 g×f5           ♗f6**  
**26 ♖d2            ...**

There is nothing White can do to prevent the sacrifice. Above all, he must protect his e-pawn.

**26 ...            ♗×d5**

Not a surprise anymore.

**27 e×d5           ♜×d5**  
**28 ♜f1            ...**

White's King tries to flee, but in the end it will still be caught in a mating net. More stubborn was 28 f3 to keep the Black Queen from invading. Still, Black's attack is decisive after 28...♞×f5, e.g.: (a) 29 ♗×b5 ♗b7 30 ♞a7 ♞×f3 31 ♞×b7 ♞g3+ and wins; (b) 29 ♞f1 (to prevent 29...♞×f3) 29...♞d3 30 ♗c2 ♗g5 31 ♞e1 ♗×f3 and White's position collapses.

**28 ...            ♞×f5**  
**29 ♗×b5        ♗b7**

Black is in no hurry to continue his attack. First he attacks the Knight on b5.

30 ♖c2 g6  
31 ♖a5 ...

The only way to avert an immediate mating attack was 31 ♖e4, but then Black would be a pawn up with a superior position.

31 ... ♖g2+  
32 ♖e2 ♗h4

Now all Black's pieces participate in the attack. It is interesting to apply Hodgson's theory about attacking and defending pieces here: Black has four attackers and White only two defenders, his Bishop and the Knight on d2. Small wonder that the Black attack is irresistible.

33 ♖xf5 ...

Eliminating one of the attacking pieces, but at what a price.

33 ... gxf5

The scoresheet indicates 33... ♗c6 here. I find it, however, hard to believe that Botvinnik would have played that move, allowing 34 b5 with an important tempo. It is equally unlikely that Ragozin would not have taken the unexpected chance. After the text move Black's main threat is 34...f3+ 35 ♖d1 ♗xf2 -+ ± 35 ♖e1 ♖g1+ 36 ♗f1 ♖g6! and the Queen will penetrate on the Queenside with devastating effect.

34 ♗xd6 f4  
35 ♗c5 ♗c6  
36 ♗f5 ♗f6  
37 ♗e7 ♗e4!

Accurate play, preventing all counterplay.

38 ♗h6+ ♖g7  
39 ♗xf6+ ♖xh6  
40 ♗xe4 ♖xe4+ 0-1

A fine attacking game.



**(23) Botvinnik-Ragozin, July 13, 1946** 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 d4 exd4 7 e5 ♗e4 8 ♗xd4 O-O 9 ♖e1 ♗xd4 10 ♖xe4 ♗e6 11 ♗c3 ♗c5 12 ♖d4 f6 13 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 14 e6 ♗xe6 15 ♖xd7 ♖e8 16 ♖d3 ♗d6 17 ♗e3 ♖c6 18 ♖d2 f5 19 f3 ♖ae8 20 ♗d5 ♖c4 21 ♗f2 ♗e5 22 c3 ♗c5 23 ♖e3 c6 24 ♖ae1 ♗d7 25 ♗b6 ♗xb6 26 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 27 ♖xe5 ♗d5 28 b3 ♖xc3 29 ♖xd5 ♖a1+ 30 ♖d1 ♖xa2 31 ♖d7 b5 32 ♗c5 ♖e8 33 ♖d8 1-0

**(24) Botvinnik-Ragozin, July 16, 1946** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♗c3 e6 6 ♗f4 ♖b6 7 ♖c2 ♗c6 8 e3 ♗d7 9 ♗e2 ♗e7 10 ♗d2 ♖c8 11 a3 O-O 12 O-O ♖d8 13 ♖fc1 ♗e8 14 ♗g3 ♗d6 15 ♗b3 ♗e4 16 ♖d1 ♗xg3 17 hxg3 ♗a5 18 ♗c5 ♗xc5 19 dxc5 ♖f6 20 b4 ♗c6 21 ♗b5 ♖fd8 22 ♖d2 a6 23 ♗d6 ♖b8 24 a4 b6 25 ♖ab1 bxc5 26 bxc5 a5 27 ♗b7 ♖dc8 28 ♖b6 d4 29 ♗b5 dxe3 30 ♖xe3 ♗e5 31 c6 ♗g4 32 ♖d2 ♖c7 33 f3 ♗e5 34 ♖d6 ♖g5 35 f4 ♖xg3 36 ♖xe5 ♖cc8 37 ♖c3 ♖g4 38 cxd7 ♖d1+ 39 ♖h2 ♖xc3 40 ♖xb8+ 1-0

**(25) Ragozin-Botvinnik, July 17, 1946** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♗e7 7 ♖g4 ♗f5 8 ♗d3 h5 9 ♖f4 cxd4 10 cxd4 ♖h4 11 ♖xh4 ♗xh4 12 g3 ♗f5 13 ♗e2 ♗c6 14 c3 ♗d7 15 ♗f4 ♗a5 16 f3 ♗c6 17 ♖f2 ♖d7 18 ♗xh5 ♗xd4 19 cxd4 ♖xh5 20 h4 ♖hh8 21 ♖b1 ♗c4 22 g4 b5 23 f4 a5 24 f5 ♖ab8 25 ♖g3 b4 26 fxe6+ ♖xe6 27 ♗g5 ♖d7 28 ♖hf1 ♖e8 29 axb4 axb4 30 ♖fc1 ♖d7 31 ♗f5+ ♖c7 32 ♗f4 g6 33 ♗d3 ♖a8 34 e6+ ♖d8 35 ♗g5+ ♖c7 36 ♗xc4 dxc4 37 ♖xc4 ♖a3+ 38 ♖f2 fxe6 39 ♖bc1 ♖f8+ 40 ♖e2 ♖a2+ Unfinished

**(26) Ragozin-Botvinnik, November 12, 1947** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 c6 4 ♗f3 ♗f6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗b3 ♗a6 9 O-O c5 10 ♖e1 ♖b6 11 d5 e5 12 a4 b4 13 ♗b5 ♗d6 14 ♗d2 ♗xb5 15 axb5 ♖c7 16 e4 ♗b6 17 ♖a6 O-O 18 ♗c4 ♗fd7 19 ♖g4 ♖h8 20 ♗g5 ♖fc8 21 ♖f5 ♖g8 22 ♖ea1 ♗xc4 23 ♖c6 ♗xb2 24 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 25 ♖b1 c4 26 ♖xb2 cxb3 27 ♖xb3 ♖b8 28 h4 ♖xb5 29 ♗d8 g6 30 ♖g3 ♖cb7 31 h5 b3 32 hxg6 hxg6 33 ♖xg6+ fxg6 34 ♖xg6+ ♖h8 35 ♖h6+ ½-½

**(27) Botvinnik-Ragozin, November 17, 1947** 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3

♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 d4 exd4 7 e5 ♜e4 8 ♖e1 ♜c5 9  
 ♗xc6 dxc6 10 ♜xd4 ♜e6 11 ♜f5 ♖xd1 12 ♖xd1 ♗f8 13 ♜c3 c5 14  
 ♜d5 ♗d7 15 ♗e3 O-O-O 16 ♖d2 ♖e8 17 ♖ad1 ♗c6 18 f4 h5 19  
 ♜h4 ♜d4 20 c4 g5 21 ♜f3 ♗xd5 22 cxd5 ♜f5 23 ♗f2 gxf4 24 d6  
 cxd6 25 exd6 ♜xd6 26 ♖xd6 ♗xd6 27 ♖xd6 ♖e2 28 ♗xc5 ♖xb2  
 29 ♗d4 ♖b1+ 30 ♜f2 ♖d8 31 ♖f6 ♖d7 32 ♖xf4 ♖b4 33 g4 hxg4  
 34 ♖xg4 ♖a4 35 h4 ♖xa2+ 36 ♜g3 ♖d5 37 ♖f4 b5 38 ♖xf7 b4 39  
 ♖f8+ ♜d7 40 ♖b8 ♖a3 41 ♖b7+ ♜e6 Time: 2.00/2.00 ½-½

**(28) Botvinnik-Ragozin, March 7, 1951** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♖b5  
 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♖b3 O-O 8 c3 d5 9 d4 ♜xe4  
 10 dxe5 ♗e6 11 ♜d4 ♜a5 12 ♗c2 c5 13 ♜xe6 fxe6 14 ♖g4 ♜xf2  
 15 ♖xe6+ ♜h8 16 ♗e3 ♜e4 17 ♜d2 ♜xd2 18 ♗xd2 ♜c4 19 ♖h3  
 ♗h4 20 ♖e2 d4 21 ♗e1 g5 22 ♗xh4 gxh4 23 ♖e4 ♖a7 24 ♖xh4  
 ♖ff7 25 cxd4 cxd4 26 ♖d1 ♜e3 27 e6 ♜xc2 28 exf7 ♖xf7 29 ♖e6  
 ♖g7 30 ♖e4 1-0

**(29) Ragozin-Botvinnik, March 8, 1951** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 c6  
 4 e4 dxe4 (4...♖b4 5 ♖g4 ♜f6) 5 ♜xe4 ♖b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♖xd4 7  
 ♗xb4 ♖xe4+ 8 ♗e2 ♖xg2 (8...♜bd7 9 ♜f3 ♜e7 10 ♖d2) 9 ♗f3  
 ♖g5 10 ♜e2 c5 (10...♜h6 11 ♜g3 f5 12 ♜h5) 11 ♗c3 e5 12 ♜g3  
 ♜f6 13 ♖d6 ♜fd7 (13...e4) 14 ♜e4 (14 ♖d1♖g6) 14...♖e7 15  
 ♖g1 ♜c6 16 ♖xg7 ♖xd6 17 ♜xd6+ ♜e7 18 ♗xc6 bxc6 19 O-O-O  
 ♖f8 20 f4 h6 21 f5 ♗a6 22 ♗e1 1-0

**(30) Smyslov-Botvinnik, October 25, 1951** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3  
 d5 4 ♗g2 dxc4 5 ♖a4+ ♜bd7 6 ♖xc4 a6 7 ♖c2 c5 8 ♜f3 cxd4 9  
 ♜xd4 ♜c5 10 ♜b3 ♜xb3 11 ♖xb3 ♖c7 12 O-O ♗c5 13 ♗f4 e5 14  
 ♗g5 ♗e6 15 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 16 ♗xb7 ♖b8 17 ♗xf6 gxf6 18 ♗xa6  
 ♖xb2 19 ♖c1 ♗b6 20 ♜c3 ♗a5 21 ♜d1 ♖d2 22 ♜e3 ♜e7 23 ♜c4  
 ♖d5 24 a4 ♖b8 25 ♗b5 ♗d8 26 ♜e3 ♖d4 27 ♜c2 ♖d2 28 ♜b4  
 ♗d7 29 ♖d1 ♖d4 30 ♖xd4 exd4 31 ♖d1 ♗xb5 32 axb5 ♖xb5 33  
 ♜c6+ ♜e8 34 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 35 ♖xd4+ ♜e7 36 ♖h4 h5 37 ♖f4 ♜e6  
 38 ♜g2 ♖b2 39 e3 ♖b5 40 ♜h3 ♜e7 41 ♜h4 1-0

**(31) Botvinnik-Smyslov, October 31, 1951** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3  
 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♖b3 O-O 8 d3 d6 9 c3

♖a5 10 ♗c2 c5 11 ♜bd2 ♗e6 12 ♜f1 ♜d7 13 d4 cxd4 14 cxd4 f6  
 15 ♜e3 ♗e8 16 d5 ♗f7 17 b4 ♜c4 18 ♜xc4 bxc4 19 ♗a4 a5 20  
 bxa5 ♗f8 21 ♗c6 ♗xa5 22 ♗d2 ♗a3 23 ♗e3 ♗xe3 24 ♗xe3 ♜b8  
 25 ♗b5 c3 26 ♗b3 ♗a5 27 ♗c1 ♗c8 28 ♗c4 ♜d7 29 ♗xc3 ♜c5 30  
 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 31 ♗c2 ♗e8 32 ♗d3 ♗f8 33 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 34 ♗c4 ♗a3  
 35 g3 ♗d8 36 ♗g2 ♗b6 37 ♜e1 ♗a5 38 ♜c2 ♗d2 39 ♗e2 ♗c5 40  
 ♗d3 ♗a5 41 ♗a6 ♗d2 42 ♜e3 ♗d7 43 ♗f3 ♗e1 44 ♗f1 ♗e7 45  
 ♗e2 ♗c3 46 ♗c2 ♗e1 47 ♗d1 ♗c3 48 ♗d3 g6 49 ♗c2 ♗e1 50  
 ♗d1 ♗c3 51 ♗e2 ♗c1 52 ♗g2 h5 53 ♜c4 h4 54 gxh4 ♗f4 55 ♜e3  
 ♗xh4 56 ♗f3 ♗d8 57 ♗c2 ♗c7 58 ♗g3 ♗xg3+ 59 ♗xg3 ♗xe3 60  
 fx3 ♗b6 61 h4 ♗c5 62 ♗d1 ♗e8 63 a3 ♗c4 64 ♗f2 ♗c3 ½-½

**(32) Botvinnik-Smyslov, February 13, 1952** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3  
 ♜c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♜e2 d5 6 a3 cxd4 7 axb4 dxc3 8 ♜xc3 dxc4 9  
 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 10 ♗xc4 ♜c6 11 b5 ♜e5 12 ♗e2 ♗e7 13 f4 ♜ed7 14  
 b3 ♗d8 15 ♗a3+ ♗e8 16 ♗d6 ♜b8 17 ♗c7 ♗d7 18 ♗b6 ♜d5 19  
 ♜xd5 ♗xd5 20 ♗xa7 ♗xa7 21 ♗xa7 ♜d7 22 e4 1-0

**(33) Smyslov-Botvinnik, February 14, 1952** 1 d4 f5 2 e4 fx4 3  
 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 g4 h6 5 ♜h3 d5 6 f3 c5 7 dxc5 e5 8 fx4 ♗xg4 9 ♗d3  
 ♗xc5 10 exd5 O-O 11 ♗e3 e4 12 ♗d2 ♗xe3 13 ♗xe3 ♗f3 14 ♗g1  
 ♜g4 15 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 16 ♜f2 ♗f3 17 ♗h3 ♗d6 18 ♗e6+ ♗h8 19  
 ♗d2 ♜a6 20 ♗e1 ♜c7 21 ♜fx4 ♗xh2+ 22 ♗c1 ♗ae8 23 ♗c5  
 ♗f4+ 24 ♜d2 ♗xd5 25 ♜xd5 ♜xe6 26 ♗xa7 ♜c7 27 ♗xe8 ♗xe8  
 0-1

**(34) Kan-Botvinnik, October 17, 1952** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 c6 4  
 e4 dxe4 5 ♜xe4 ♗b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♗xd4 7 ♗xb4 ♗xe4+ 8 ♗e2 ♜d7 9  
 ♜f3 c5 10 ♗c3 ♜e7 11 O-O f6 12 ♗d3 ♗c6? 13 ♗c2 (13 ♜h4)  
 13...e5? 14 ♜h4 ♗e6 15 ♗d3 g5 16 ♜f3 ♜g6 17 ♗ad1 ♜f4  
 (17...♜b6) 18 ♗e3 ♗g4 19 g3 O-O 20 ♗d6 (♜b6)♜e6 21 ♗fd1  
 ♜d4 22 ♗xd4 cxd4 23 ♜xd4 exd4 24 ♗1xd4 ♗h5 25 ♗xd7 ♗xd7  
 26 ♗xd7 ♗ae8 27 ♗e4 ♗f7 28 ♗d4 ♗g7 29 ♗d5 ♗h6 30 ♗f5 ♗e5  
 31 ♗d7 ♗h5 32 g4 ♗xd7 33 ♗xd7+ ♗f7 34 ♗d3 h5 35 h3 ♗e1+  
 36 ♗g2 ♗e8 37 ♗f3 ♗c6 38 ♗xc6 bxc6 39 c5 hxg4 40 hxg4 ♗e2  
 41 b4 ♗xa2 42 b5 ♗a5 43 ♗d3 ♗f8 44 b6 axb6 45 cxb6 ♗a4 0-1

**(35) Botvinnik-Kan, October 24, 1952** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♗b5

a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♜xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 O-O 11 ♜d4 ♜xe5 12 f3 ♗d6 13 fxe4 ♗g4 14 ♗d2 ♗h4 15 h3 c5 16 ♖f1 cxd4 17 cxd4 dxe4 (17...♜f3+) 18 ♗g5 ♜f3+ 19 ♖xf3 ♗xg5 20 ♗xg5 exf3 21 hxg4 ♖ae8 22 ♜c3 b4 23 ♜d5 fxg2 24 ♖xg2 ♖e2+ 25 ♖f3 ♖xb2 26 ♜e7+ ♖h8 27 ♜f5 ♗b8 28 ♗e7 ♖c8 29 ♗xb4 h6 30 ♗c5 ♖h7 31 ♖e1 g6 32 ♜e7 ♖c7 33 ♗xf7 ♖g7 34 ♗b3 ♗a7 35 ♗d6 ♖c3+ 36 ♖e4 ♖g2 37 ♗e5+ ♖f8 38 ♜xg6+ ♖e8 39 ♗e6 1-0

**(36) Kan-Botvinnik, October 29, 1952** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 c6 4 e4 dxe4 5 ♜xe4 ♗b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♗xd4 7 ♗xb4 ♗xe4+ 8 ♗e2 ♗xg2 9 ♗f3 ♗g5 10 ♜e2 c5 11 ♗c3 e5 12 ♖g1 ♗e7 13 ♖xg7 ♗f6 14 ♖g3 (14 ♖xf7) 14...♜e7 15 ♗e4 ♜bc6 16 f4 ♗e6 17 ♗d6 ♖d8 18 ♗xc5 ♗h4 19 ♗f2 ♖f8 20 b3 f6 21 ♖g7 ♗xf2+ 22 ♖xf2 ♖f7 23 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 24 fxe5 fxe5 25 ♜g1 ♗f5 26 ♖e1 ♗xe4 27 ♖xe4 ♖e8 28 ♖h4 ♖g7 29 ♜f3 ♜f5 30 ♖e4 ♖f6 31 b4 ♜d6 32 ♖h4 ♖f5 33 ♖e3 b5 34 cxb5 ♜xb5 35 ♗b2 ♜d6 36 ♗c3 ♖g6 37 ♖g4+ ♖f5 38 h3 ♖e6 39 ♜g5+ ♖d5 40 ♜xh7 ♖h8 ½-½

**(37) Kan-Botvinnik, November 1, 1952** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 d6 8 c3 O-O 9 h3 ♜a5 10 ♗c2 c5 11 d4 ♗c7 12 ♜bd2 ♜c6 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 a4 ♖b8 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♜f1 ♗d6 17 ♗g5 ♜e8 18 ♜e3 f6 19 ♜d5 ♗b7 20 ♗e3 ♗e6 21 ♜d2 ♜e7 22 ♜xe7+ ♗xe7 23 ♗e2 ♖f7 24 ♖a5 ♗b7 25 ♖ea1 ♜c7 26 c4 ♗f8 27 ♗d3 bxc4 28 ♜xc4 ♗c6 29 ♗c2 ♜b5 30 ♖a6 ♗c8 31 ♜b6 ♗e8 32 ♜d5 ♖h8 33 ♗c4 ♜d6 34 ♗xc5 ♜xc4 35 ♗xc4 ♗xd5 36 ♗xd5 ♖xb2 37 ♖a8 ♖b8 38 ♖xb8 1-0

**(38) Botvinnik-Kan, November 2, 1952** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♗b4 4 e3 O-O 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 b6 7 ♗d3 ♗b7 8 f3 c5 9 e4 d6 10 ♗g5 ♜bd7 11 ♜e2 ♗c7 12 O-O ♖fc8 13 ♖c1 ♜e8 14 ♜g3 ♜f8 15 d5 f6 16 ♗e3 e5 17 ♖f2 ♖cb8 18 ♜f1 ♗c8 19 a4 ♗d7 20 ♖b1 ♗c8 21 ♖fb2 ♜g6 22 ♗c2 ♜e7 23 g3 ♜c7 24 f4 ♗e8 25 ♖a1 ♜c8 26 f5 a6 27 ♗e2 b5 28 a5 ♖b7 29 h4 ♖ab8 30 g4 ♗d8 31 ♖f2 ♜e8 32 ♜g3 bxc4 33 ♖ba2 ♜a7 34 ♗d2 ♜b5 35 ♗xc4 ♖h8 36 ♖g1 ♜bc7 37 ♗e2 ♗c8 38 c4 ♖b3 39 ♗c3 ♗d8 40 ♗d2 ♗e7 41 ♗d1 Unfinished

**(39) Flohr-Botvinnik, November 4, 1952** 1 ♖f3 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 d5 4 d4 ♗g7 5 ♖a4+ ♗d7 6 ♖b3 dxc4 7 ♖xc4 O-O 8 g3 ♗e6 9 ♖a4 ♗d5 10 ♗g2 ♗c6 11 O-O ♗b6 12 ♖c2 ♗xd4 13 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♗xb7 ♖ab8 15 ♗g2 ♖c4 16 ♗d2 c5 17 b3 ♖a6 18 ♗g5 ♖fe8 19 ♖ad1 c4 20 b4 ♖a3 21 ♗b5 ♖xb4 22 ♗c7 ♗f5 23 ♗e4 ♗d7 24 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 25 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 26 ♗c6 ♖d8 27 ♖d1 ♖c5 ½-½

**(40) Botvinnik-Kan, November 14, 1952** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 ♗c6 6 ♗e2 e5 7 ♗b3 ♗e7 8 O-O O-O 9 ♗f3 ♗e6 10 ♗e3 ♖c8 11 ♖d2 b6 12 ♖fd1 h6 13 ♖ac1 ♗b4 14 a3 ♗c6 15 ♗d5 ♗xd5 16 exd5 ♗b8 17 c4 ♗h7 18 ♗e2 ♗d7 19 ♗a1 f5 20 f4 ♗hf6 21 g3 ♗e4 22 ♖d3 ♖e8 23 b4 ♖g6 24 ♖g2 h5 25 ♖f1 h4 26 ♗c2 ♗xg3 27 hxg3 ♖xg3+ 28 ♖h1 e4 29 ♖d2 ♖h3+ 30 ♖g1 ♖g3+ 31 ♖h1 ♖h3+ 32 ♖g1 ♖f6 33 ♗h5 ♖h6 34 ♖f2 ♖xh5 35 ♖h2 ♖g3+ 36 ♖g2 ♖h3 37 ♖h2 ♖g3+ ½-½

**(41) Kan-Botvinnik, January 20, 1953**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

<b>1 d4</b>	<b>♗f6</b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>g6</b>
<b>3 ♗c3</b>	<b>d5</b>
<b>4 cxd5</b>	<b>♗xd5</b>
<b>5 g3</b>	<b>♗g7</b>
<b>6 ♗g2</b>	<b>♗xc3</b>
<b>7 bxc3</b>	<b>c5</b>
<b>8 e3</b>	<b>...</b>

White has chosen a modest system that will lead to a strategic middlegame with chances for both sides. With the text move, he prepares to develop his King's Knight to e2.

**8 ... ♖a5**

Probably the most accurate move, which is also borne out by the fact that Kramnik played it 44 years later. Black's idea is to answer 9 ♗e2 with 9...cxd4, breaking the white pawn chain. (This is what actually

happened in Kiril Georgiev-Kramnik, Belgrade 1997, a game that ended in a draw after 23 moves.)

**9 ♗d2 ...**

In order to take back on d4 with the c-pawn. The drawback is that the Bishop is not very well posted on d2.

**9 ... O-O  
10 ♗e2 ...**

In Hort-Wahls, Biel 1990, White changed his plan and continued 10 ♗f3. After the further 10...♞d8 11 0-0 ♗c6 12 ♖e2 a6 13 ♞fd1 ♖c7 14 ♗e1 ♗a5 15 e4 ♗d7 the chances were approximately equal.

**10 ... ♗c6  
11 O-O ♞b8**

A preventive move. Before developing his Queen's Bishop, he gives the b-pawn extra protection.

**12 h3 ...**

A dubious move. There was no reason to prevent Black's Queen's Bishop from developing on g4. Thus White loses a vital tempo in the strategical struggle. Moreover, the h-pawn may actually become a target in some variations.

**12 ... ♞d8  
13 ♞b1 ♗e6**

With a steady hand Botvinnik develops his pieces to the best squares. After securing the d5 square, the Bishop has an ideal outpost on e6, controlling the vital square c4 and attacking the a-pawn.

**14 ♗c1 ...**

Protecting the a-pawn and meanwhile bringing the Knight to b3 in order to protect the somewhat weakened queenside.

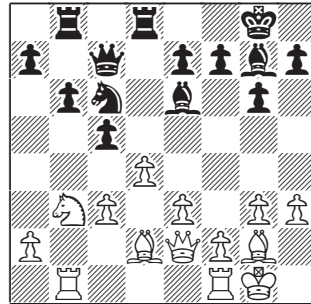
14 ... ♔c7

An adequate reaction. Black retreats his Queen in order to be able to keep the tension on the queenside. This is a very important part of his strategy: After the disappearance of the c-pawns, White would be slightly better. With the pawns, Black is slightly better, because he has a clamp of the queenside.

15 ♘b3 ♖b6

The point of the previous move. White cannot take on c5 now, because he is pinned along the d-file.

16 ♔e2 ...



16 ... ♘a5!!

A tremendous move that shows deep understanding. Black has no concerns about his pawn structure; he is only focused on the activity of his pieces. With the text, he plans to eliminate White's best defender of the queenside, meanwhile opening up the b-file as an operational basis. He is especially aiming at White's a-pawn that will become very weak, after the Knight on b3 has been exchanged.

17 ♘×a5 ♖×a5

18 ♖×b8 ...

In connection with the next move, an understandable plan. White wants to bring his passive Bishop to the active outpost on a3. He has, however, no time to execute this plan without losing his a-pawn, as the game will show.

It was high time to think of emergency measures. White's best chance was 18 d5, in order to sacrifice a pawn in exchange for counterplay. After 18...♖×b1 19 ♖×b1 ♗×d5 20 ♗×d5 ♖×d5 21 c4, followed by 22 ♖b5, he has quite reasonable chances to keep the balance.

**18 ... ♖×b8**  
**19 ♗c1 ...**

It was too late for 19 d5, because after 19...♗d7 20 c4 ♖b2 Black would become too active.

**19 ... c×d4**  
**20 c×d4 ♖c4!**

A very fine move. Black wins the a-pawn by force. The alternative, 20...♗c4, would have been pointless, because of 21 ♖c2 and the Bishop is pinned.

**21 ♖e1 ♖×a2**

Not 21...♖×e2 22 ♖×e2 ♖b1 23 ♖c2 and White has an easy defense.

**22 ♖×a2 ♗×a2**  
**23 ♗a3 ...**

The technical part is by no means easy for Black. His extra pawn is doubled, while White has kept a solid structure and active pieces.

**23 ... e6**  
**24 ♗c5 ♗f8**

Straightforward strategy. Black must first exchange White's active Bishop



before making further progress. Premature was 24...♖b1, since after 25 ♜x♖b1 ♜x♖b1 26 ♜c6 ♜f8 27 ♝f1 the White King reaches the queenside in time.

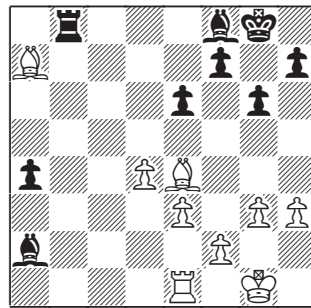
**25 ♜e4 ...**

The only move, since 25...♖b1 was a real threat.

**25 ... a4**

Equally forced, because White was threatening 26 ♜a1 [?].

**26 ♜x♖a7 ...**



**26 ... ♜c8**

The only moment in the game when criticism of Botvinnik's play is appropriate. The systematic 26...♖b2! would have given Black a watertight winning scheme. After the forced moves 27 ♜c5 a3 28 ♜a1 Black follows up with 28...f5! 29 ♜d3 ♜d2 and White will be gradually outmaneuvered, e.g., 30 ♜f1 ♝f7 31 ♜g2 ♖b2 (threatening 32...♖b1+) 32 ♜f1 ♜xc5 33 dxc5 ♝e7 and the Black King approaches without hindrance.

After the text move, the winning plan is more complicated and takes more time, since the Black Rook will remain passive for a while.

**27 ♜c5 ...**

The best chance. White manages to exchange Black's active King's Bishop for his own passive Bishop (note that a few moves ago it was

the other way around), without losing a pawn.

27 ... ♔×c5  
28 ♖c1 ...

The point of the previous move. White profits from the pin along the c-file. Still, Black is winning, because he manages to bring his a-pawn to a2.

28 ... ♕b3  
29 d×c5 a3  
30 ♕b7 ...

Again the most stubborn defense. By putting the Bishop on b7, he makes his passed c-pawn a potential threat, which hampers the winning process.

30 ... ♖c7  
31 c6 a2  
32 ♖a1 ...

Black was threatening 32...♕c2 to lock in White's Rook at a1. Still, it is interesting to see how Black would win the ending after 32 ♖f1 ♕c2 33 ♖a1 ♕b1 34 ♖f1 ♖f8 35 ♖e2 ♖e7 36 ♖d3 ♖d6 37 ♖c4 ♖×c6+ (the only way to make progress) 38 ♕×c6 ♖×c6. This is some sort of pawn endgame, in which Black has a significant advantage, because of the block on a1, a2 and b1, but the advantage is not necessarily a decisive one.

As a comparison, I give an example from my own tournament practice, Timman-Hjartarsson, Rotterdam 1989:

White played 29...a×b5, having the following variation in mind: 29...♖×c5 30 a7 ♖cc8 31 ♖b1 ♖a8 32 ♖b8 f6 33 ♖×e8 ♖×e8 34 ♖h2 ♖a8 35 ♕b8

White wins easily after 35...♖f7 36 ♖g3 ♖e6 37 ♖f4. The Black King is going to lose ground because of the configuration on the queenside.

Back to the present game: The win is slightly more complicated because the Black King has difficulties crossing the fourth rank. It is still a win because Black is helped by a tactical finesse, e.g., 39 e4 f5 40 f3 (after 40 e5 g5 White will soon be in Zugzwang) 40...♔d6 41 ♖d4 e5+ 42 ♜c4 fxe4 43 fxe4 ♕xe4! 44 ♜d1+ ♜e6 45 ♜b3 ♕b1 46 ♜b2 e4 47 ♜d8 ♜e5 48 ♜a8 e3 49 ♜c1 ♜e4 50 ♜d1 ♜f3 51 ♜e1 ♜g2 and after eliminating White's kingside, Black wins easily.

<b>32 ...</b>	<b>♕c4</b>
<b>33 f3</b>	<b>♜f8</b>
<b>34 ♜f2</b>	<b>♜e7</b>
<b>35 ♜e1</b>	<b>f5</b>

After both sides have moved their Kings toward the queenside, Black throws in a pawn move that will prove to be useful in any case.

<b>36 ♜d2</b>	<b>♜d6</b>
<b>37 f4</b>	<b>...</b>

But this pawn move is wrong and will make Black's task much easier. Tougher was 37 ♜c3 ♜c5 38 e4, not allowing Black the outpost on d5 for the Bishop. Still, Black is winning, e.g., 38...fxe4 39 fxe4 ♜f7 followed by 40 [?] ♜f3+ and 41...♜d6.

<b>37 ...</b>	<b>♕d5</b>
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Now the win is easy, because Black just has to create an entrance for his Rook on the kingside.

<b>38 h4</b>	<b>h6</b>
<b>39 ♜d1</b>	<b>g5</b>
<b>40 h×g5</b>	<b>h×g5</b>
<b>41 f×g5</b>	Unfinished

Here the game ended unfinished. Kan could just as well have resigned because after 41...♜g7, followed by 42...♜g5, the black Rook will penetrate with devastating effect.

**(42) Kan-Botvinnik, May 22, 1953** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♖f6 4

♖c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♔c2 ♕d6 7 ♕d2 O-O 8 O-O-O c5 9 cxd5  
 exd5 10 dxc5 ♗xc5 11 ♕e1 ♕e6 12 ♗d4 a6 13 ♖b1 ♖c8 14 g3 b5  
 15 ♗xe6 fxe6 16 ♕h3 ♖e7 17 ♖c1 ♖c7 18 ♖d1 ♖b8 19 ♗e2 b4  
 20 ♗d4 a5 21 ♖e2 ♖e8 22 f4 e5 23 ♗f5 ♕f8 24 ♖f1 g6 25 fxe5  
 ♖xe5 26 ♗d4 ♗fe4 27 ♖a1 ♕g7 28 ♕f2 a4 29 ♕g1 a3 30 bxa3 b3  
 31 ♖b1 ♗a4 0-1

**(43) Botvinnik-Kan, May 23, 1953**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

<b>1 d4</b>	<b>♗f6</b>
<b>2 c4</b>	<b>e6</b>
<b>3 ♗c3</b>	<b>♕b4</b>
<b>4 e3</b>	<b>...</b>

Botvinnik has always favored two lines of the Nimzo: The Sämisch Variation (with 4 a3) and the Rubinstein Variation, as in the present game.

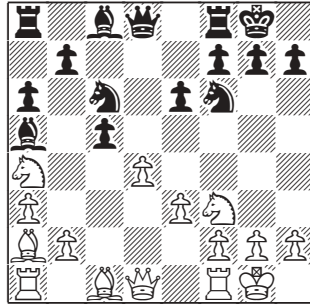
<b>4 ...</b>	<b>c5</b>
<b>5 ♗f3</b>	<b>d5</b>
<b>6 ♕d3</b>	<b>O-O</b>
<b>7 O-O</b>	<b>dxc4</b>
<b>8 ♕xc4</b>	<b>♗c6</b>
<b>9 a3</b>	<b>♕a5</b>

Kan has chosen a line that is known as "Larsen's Variation". It was popular in the late 60s and early 70s. Black retreats his Bishop and is only ready to exchange on c3 if White takes on c5.

<b>10 ♕a2!</b>	<b>...</b>
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Polugaevsky's move from his 1974 match against Karpov and at the same time the reason that Larsen's Variation practically disappeared from practice. White anticipates Black's plan of playing a7-a6 and b7-b5, which would work after 10 ♖d3 a6 11 ♖d1 b5 12 ♕a2 ♕b6 with equality (Portisch-Olafsson, Wijk aan Zee 1969)

<b>10 ...</b>	<b>a6</b>
<b>11 ♗a4</b>	<b>...</b>



This was also Polugaevsky's original idea. He played it in the third match game against Karpov. Since he didn't get an advantage in that game, he tried 11 ♖b1! In the fifth game, preparing a battery along the b1-h7 diagonal. After 11...♗b6 12 ♛c2 g6 13 dxc5 ♗xc5 14 b4 ♗e7 15 ♗b2 e5 16 ♜d1 White has a dangerous initiative. It is interesting to read Botvinnik's own comments about the text move.

While commenting on the third Polugaevsky-Karpov game in his book Karpov's *Wettkämpfe zur Weltmeisterschaft* he has the following to say about 11 ♗a4: "The White Bishop stands somewhat passive on a2 and now the Knight is moved to the edge of the board." Rather critical words for a move that Botvinnik himself actually played twice (see also game 49).

**11 ... c4**

The wrong reaction, leaving White a strong center under favorable circumstances. Late Kan improved by exchanging on d4, which was also Karpov's choice. After 11...cxd4 12 exd4 h6 (preventing the Queen's Bishop from developing to g5) 13 ♗f4, Karpov played 13...♗c7 (instead of Kan's 13...♗d5). The game was equal after that; the remaining moves were 14 ♗xc7 ♛xc7 15 ♛e2 ♜fd8 16 ♜fd1 ♗d7 17 ♜ac1 ♗e8 18 ♗c3 ♜d6 19 d5 exd5 20 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 21 ♜xd5 ♜ad8 and a draw was agreed.

**12 b3! ...**

Before Black is able to build up a strong queenside majority, White breaks the outpost.

**12 ... cxb3**

An interesting try was 12...♙c3 13 ♖b1 e5. In that case White keeps an edge by 14 d5!, e.g., 14...♗xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 16 bxc4 ♘c7 17 ♘e4 ♙a5 18 ♘d6 with strong pressure.

**13 ♗xb3 ♙c7**

Black wants to fianchetto his Queen's Bishop without giving up the c5-square. This plan is rather slow, as the game continuation will show. Still, the text move is Black's best choice for a different [?], as we will see.

**14 ♙b2 b6**

Black's best set-up was 14...♘c5, followed by 15...♙d7 with some counterplay. Now White takes complete control.

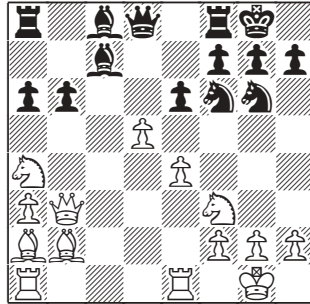
**15 e4 ...**

Based on the fact that 15...♘xe4 is impossible because of 16 ♗c2 winning a piece (16...♘g5 17 ♘xg5 ♗xg5 18 ♗xc6 or 16...♘d6 17 ♗xc6 ♙d7 18 ♗c2).

**15 ... ♘e7**  
**16 ♖fe1 ♘g6**

Why not develop the Bishop by 16...♙b7? Kan possibly feared the tricky Knight move 17 ♘g5 with the following possibilities: (a) 17...♗d6 18 e5 ♗c6 19 ♗h3! and wins; (b) 17...h6 18 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 19 ♗xe6+ ♖e8 20 ♖ac1 with very strong compensation for the piece. Still Black had to go in for this, since after 20...♗d7 the situation is not entirely clear. Botvinnik may not have chosen the wild knight sortie. A strong alternative is 17 d5 exd5 18 ♖ad1 with advantage for White. The text move allows the same push under very favorable circumstances.

**17 d5 ...**



17 ... e5

Positional resignation. Black had to play 17...e×d5. If then 18 e5, Black gets active play by 18...♗h5! 19 ♖×d5 ♕e6. So White has to take back with 18 e×d5 and then follow-up with 19 ♖ad1. He has a great space advantage, but Black can try to [?] by 18...♗g4.

18 ♖ad1 ...

Very classical play. What has put both Rooks on the central files and is now threatening 19 d6 ♕×d6 20 ♖×b6 and wins.

18 ... b5

Another concession, but there was little choice. On 18...♖d6 White has the powerful reply 19 ♕c3! b5 20 ♗b2.

19 ♗c5 ♕d6  
20 ♗d3 ...

Aiming for an even better square: c6.

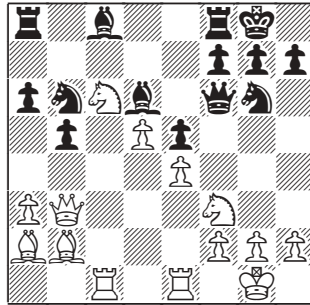
20 ... ♗d7  
21 ♖c1 ...

There is no more work for the rook on the d-file, so it occupies the open c-file.

21 ... ♖e7  
22 ♗b4 ♗b6

Allowing a “petite combinaison”. It was however difficult to find a decent move, because White controls the board after 22...♖c5 23 ♖c6! ♗×b3 24 ♖×e7+ 25 ♗×b3 ♗d6 26 ♖c6 ♗b8 27 ♖fc1 ♗d7 28 ♖b6.

23 ♖c6 ♖f6



24 ♖c×e5! ...

Very elegant.

24 ... ♖×e5  
25 ♗×e5 ...

Of course not 25 ♖×e5? ♗×e5 26 ♖c6, because after 26...♗×b? 27 ♖×f6 ♗×f6 Black has plenty of material for the Queen.

25 ... ♗×e5  
26 ♖c6 ...

The point of White's play. He wins back the piece and keeps his mighty center pawns.

26 ... ♗×h2+

There is nothing better than to take this unimportant pawn.

27 ♖×h2 ♖d8  
28 ♖e3 ♖b8  
29 ♖ec1 ...



White double the Rooks in order to answer 29...♙d7 with 30 ♖c7.

29 ...	♖e8
30 ♗f3	♙f5
31 e5!	...

The pawns get moving.

31 ...	♙d7
--------	-----

This is utterly hopeless, but after 31...♗x d5 32 ♖b3 ♙e6 33 ♖x d5 Black is also lost. The minor pieces win easily, because of Black's weakness on f7.

32 ♖d6	♗c8
33 ♖x a6	♙g4
34 ♗g5	♙h5
35 d6	h6
36 ♗x f7!	...

Not a difficult sacrifice. The Black King will be caught in a mating net.

36 ...	♙x f7
37 ♙x f7+	♖x f7
38 ♖b3+	♖f8
39 ♖c3	♗x d6
40 ♖f3+	1-0

**(44) Kan-Botvinnik, May 25/26, 1953** 1. d4 e6 2. ♗f3 f5 3. g3 ♗f6 4. ♙g2 ♙e7 5. O-O O-O 6. c4 d6 7. ♗c3 ♖e8 8. ♖e1 ♖h5 9. e4 fxe4 10. ♗xe4 e5 11. ♙g5 ♗c6 12. ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 13. ♙xf6 gxf6 14. d5 ♗e7 15. ♗d4 ♖f7 16. ♖e2 ♙d7 17. ♖ad1 ♖ae8 18. ♗c2 ♖h8 19. ♖d2 ♗g6 20. ♖c3 b6 21. ♗e3 f5 22. f4 ♖g7 23. fxe5 ♖xe5 24. ♖f1 f4 25. ♗c2 ♖g5 26. ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 27. ♗d4 fxg3 28. ♖xf8 gxh2+ 29. ♖xh2 ♖xf8 30. ♗f3 ♖h5+ 31. ♖g3 ♗e5 32. ♗xe5 ♖xe5 33. ♙f3 a5 34. ♖h1 ♖g7 35. ♖f4 ♙f5 36. b3 ♖f6 37. a3 ♙g6 38. b4 ♖f5+ 39. ♖e3 ♖e5 40. ♖h4 axb4 41. axb4 ♖g5 42. c5 bxc5 43. bxc5 dxc5 44. ♖c4 ♖d6 45. ♖a4 ♖e5+ 46. ♖f4 ♙d3 47. ♖a8 ♖e7 48. ♖d8+ ♖d7 49. ♖e8 c4 50. ♖e6+ ♖c5 51. ♖e5 ♖b4 52. ♖d4

♖f7 53. ♗h5 ♖f5 54. ♗d1 ♖f4+ 55. ♜e3 ♖f1 56. ♗h5 ♜c3 57.  
 ♗f3 ♖e1+ 58. ♜f4 ♜d2 59. ♖h6 c3 60. ♖h2+ ♜c1 0-1

**(45) Botvinnik-Kan, May 27, 1953** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4  
 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 a6 6 f4 e5 7 ♗f3 ♜c7 8 ♗d3 ♗e6 9 ♜e2 ♗e7 10  
 f5 ♗d7 11 g4 h6 12 g5 hxg5 13 ♗xg5 ♗c6 14 O-O-O b5 15 a3  
 ♗bd7 16 ♗d2 ♜b7 17 ♗b3 ♗d8 18 ♖hg1 ♜f8 19 ♖g2 ♖b8 20  
 ♖dg1 ♖h7 21 ♜d2 ♗b6 22 ♗e3 ♗e8 23 ♗xb6 ♜xb6 24 ♗e2  
 ♗df6 25 ♗g3 ♖xh2 26 ♗a5 ♗a8 27 ♜e1 ♖xg2 28 ♖xg2 ♖c8 29  
 ♖h2 ♜e7 30 ♖h8 ♖d8 31 ♜b1 ♗c7 32 ♖h4 ♖b8 33 b4 ♖c8 34  
 ♗b3 ♗ce8 35 ♜b2 ♜c7 36 ♖h8 ♜b8 37 ♜d2 ♗c7 38 ♖h4 ♖h8 39  
 ♜g5 ♖xh4 40 ♜xh4 ♜g8 41 ♜h2 Unfinished

**(46) Kan-Botvinnik, June 20, 1953** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4  
 ♗c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 e5  
 cxd4 11 ♗xb5 ♗xe5 12 ♗xe5 axb5 13 ♜f3 ♜a5+ 14 ♜e2 ♗d6 15  
 ♜c6+ ♜e7 16 ♗xf7 ♖a6 17 ♜xa6 ♗xa6 18 ♗xh8 b4 19 ♖d1 ♜e5+  
 20 ♜f1 ♗xd3+ 21 ♖xd3 ♜b5 22 ♜e2 ♗e4 0-1

**(47) Botvinnik-Kan, June 22, 1953** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4  
 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 g6 6 ♗e3 ♗g7 7 f3 O-O 8 ♜d2 ♗c6 9 O-O-O d5  
 10 exd5 (10 ♗xc6) 10...♗xd5 (10...♗b4) 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 ♗xd5  
 cxd5 13 ♜xd5 ♜c7 14 ♜c5 ♜b7 15 ♜a3 ♗f5 16 ♗d3 ♖fc8 17  
 ♗xf5 gxf5 18 ♖d3 ♜c6 19 c3 f4 20 ♗f2 ♜g6 21 ♖hd1 ♜xg2 22  
 ♗d4 ♗xd4 23 ♖xd4 ♖ab8 24 ♖4d2 ♜g6 25 ♖d7 e5 26 ♜xa7 ♜h8  
 27 ♜a5 f6 28 ♜a7 ♜f5 29 ♖e7 ♜g6 30 ♖c7 ♖g8 31 ♜c5 ♜g2 32  
 ♜a3 ♜xf3 33 ♜e7 ♜e3+ 34 ♜b1 ♜e4+ 35 ♜c1 ♜e3+ 36 ♜b1  
 ♜e4+ 37 ♜c1 ½-½

**(48) Kan-Botvinnik, June 23, 1953** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4  
 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗a5 6 b4 cxd4 7 ♜g4 ♗e7 8 ♗b5 ♗c7 9 ♜xg7 ♖g8 10  
 ♜xh7 a6 11 ♗xc7+ ♜xc7 12 ♗e2 ♜xe5 13 ♜d3 ♜c7 14 f4 ♗bc6  
 15 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 16 ♜xd4 ♜xc2 17 ♜d2 ♜g6 18 ♖a2 ♗d7 19 ♗d3  
 ♜h5 20 O-O ♗c6 21 ♜d1 ♜xd1 22 ♖xd1 ♗b5 23 ♗h7 ♖g7 24  
 ♗b1 f6 25 ♖f2 ♜f7 26 ♗b2 ♗c4 27 h3 ♖g3 28 ♜h2 ♖ag8 29 ♖e1  
 ♗c6 30 ♗h7 ♖8g7 31 f5 e5 32 ♗g6+ ♖3xg6 33 fxg6+ ♜e6 34 ♖e3  
 ♖xg6 35 ♖g3 ♖xg3 36 ♜xg3 d4 37 h4 ♗d3 38 ♗c1 e4 39 h5 e3 40

♖b2 ♗e5 Unfinished

**(49) Botvinnik-Kan, June 24, 1953** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♖b4 4 e3 O-O 5 ♖d3 d5 6 ♗f3 c5 7 O-O dxc4 8 ♖xc4 ♗c6 9 a3 ♖a5 10 ♖a2 a6 11 ♗a4 cxd4 12 exd4 h6 13 ♖f4 ♗d5 14 ♖g3 ♗ce7 15 ♗c5 ♖c7 16 ♖xc7 ♗xc7 17 ♖c1 ♗d8 18 ♗d3 b6 19 ♖b1 ♗g6 20 ♗e4 ♖b7 21 ♖fe1 ♗df4 22 ♗e3 ♗d5 23 ♗b3 ♗de7 24 ♗ed2 ♖d5 25 ♗d1 ♖c8 26 ♗e5 ♗h4 27 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 28 ♖e4 ♗hf5 29 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 30 ♗df3 ♗b7 31 ♗d2 ♖c8 32 ♖c1 ♖c7 33 ♖xc7 ♗xc7 34 g3 f6 35 ♗d3 ♗c4 36 ♗de1 ♖f7 37 ♗c2 b5 38 ♗xc4 bxc4 39 ♗c2 ♖e7 40 ♗d2 c3 41 bxc3 ♗xc3 42 ♗b4 ♗xd4 43 ♗xa6 ♖d6 44 ♗b4 ♖c5 45 f4 ♖b5 46 ♖g2 ♖a4 47 ♗f3 ♗cb5 48 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 49 ♗a6 ♖xa3 50 ♗c7 g6 51 ♗e8 f5 52 ♗d6 ♗c6 53 ♗f7 h5 54 ♖h3 ♖b4 55 ♖h4 ♗d4 56 ♗e5 ♖c5 57 ♖g5 Unfinished

**(50) Kan-Botvinnik, January 22, 1954** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗d2 c5 4 exd5 exd5 5 ♖b5+ ♗c6 6 ♗e2+ ♗e7 7 dxc5 ♗xe2+ 8 ♗xe2 ♖xc5 9 ♗b3 ♖b6 10 ♖d2 ♖d7 11 ♖c3 ♗ge7 12 O-O (12 f3) 12...O-O 13 ♖fe1 ♖fd8 14 ♗ed4 (14 ♖ad1) 14...♗f5 15 ♗xc6 (15 ♗f3) 15...bxc6 16 ♖a6 ♗d6 17 a4 ♗e4 18 ♖d4 ♖xd4 (18...♖b8) 19 ♗xd4 ♖ab8 20 b3 ♖f8 21 f3 ♗d6 22 ♖f1 ♖e8 23 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24 ♖f2 a5 25 ♖d1 ♖e7 26 ♗e2 ♗e8 27 ♖e3 ♗c7 28 ♗f4 ♖d6 29 h4 c5 30 ♖c4 ♖c6 31 ♖f2 g6 32 g3 f6 33 h5 gxh5 34 ♗xh5 ♗e6 35 ♖d3 ♖e7 36 g4 (36 ♖xh7) 36...h6 37 ♖e1 ♖d6 38 ♖g3 ♖f8 39 ♖h1 c4 40 bxc4 dxc4 41 ♖xc4 ♗d4 ½-½ 1.58/2.02

**(51) Botvinnik-Kan, January 23, 1954** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♖f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♖xc4 ♖b4 8 O-O ♗bd7 9 ♗h4 ♖g4 10 f3 ♗d5 11 fxg4 ♗xh4 12 e4 (12 ♗f3) 12...♗xc3 13 bxc3 ♖xc3 14 ♖a3 ♖b4 (14...a5) 15 ♖af3 ♖f8 16 g5 O-O-O 17 ♗e2(?) ♗h5 18 ♖xf7 ♗g6 19 ♖xf8 ♗xf8 20 ♗e3 ♗e8 21 ♖b2 ♗e7 22 h4 a5 23 ♖f3 ♗d7 24 ♗f2 ♖f8 25 ♖f1 ♖c7 26 ♖e2 ♗e8 27 ♗g3+ ♖d6 28 ♗g4 e5 29 ♖e6 exd4 30 ♖xd4 ♗e5 31 ♖xf8 ♗xf8 32 ♗f5 ♗g6 33 ♗xa5+ 1-0

**(52) Kan-Botvinnik, January 24, 1954** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♖d3 dxc4 7 ♖xc4 b5 8 ♖d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10

e5 cxd4 11 ♖xb5 ♜xe5 12 ♜xe5 axb5 13 ♜f3 ♜a5+ 14 ♜e2 ♜d6  
 15 ♜d2 ♜a6 16 ♜c6+ ♜xc6 (16...♜e7 17 ♜b4) 17 ♜xc6 b4 18  
 ♜xb4 ♜xb4 (18...♜d7)19 ♜xb4 ♜b8 20 ♜ac1 ♜d7 21 a3 ♜e7 22  
 f4 ♜hg8 23 ♜c5 h6 24 h4 ♜b6 25 ♜hc1 ♜d6 26 ♜5c4 e5 27 fxe5+  
 ♜xe5 28 ♜e1 ♜d5 29 ♜h7 ♜d8 30 ♜d3+ ♜f6 31 ♜e4 (31 ♜f1+)  
 31...♜g4+ 32 ♜d2 ♜e3 33 ♜c7 (33 ♜a4) 33...♜e8 34 ♜f3 ♜f5 35  
 ♜b4 ♜d8 36 ♜ec1 ♜dd6 37 ♜1c5 g5 38 hxg5+ hxg5 39 ♜7c6  
 ♜bxc6 40 ♜xc6 ♜e6 41 ♜d3 ♜f5+ ½-½

**(53) Botvinnik-Kan, January 26, 1954** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3  
 ♜b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♜d3 O-O 6 a3 ♜xc3+ 7 bxc3 ♜c6 8 ♜e2 b6 9 e4  
 ♜e8 10 e5 ♜a6 11 ♜c2 ♜h8 12 h4 d5 13 ♜g5 ♜d7 (13...♜c8) 14  
 cxd5 ♜xd3 15 dxc6 ♜xc2 16 cxd7 ♜c7 17 ♜e7 ♜fd8 (17...cxd5)  
 18 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 19 dxc5 bxc5 20 ♜a2 ♜e4 21 f3 ♜d5 22 ♜b2 ♜a6  
 23 ♜f2 ♜xd7 24 ♜d1 c4 25 ♜f4 1-0

**(54) Kan-Botvinnik, January 27, 1954** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5  
 a6 4 ♜a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♜e7 6 ♜e1 b5 7 ♜b3 O-O 8 c3 d6 9 h3 ♜a5  
 10 ♜c2 c5 11 d4 ♜c7 12 ♜bd2 ♜c6 13 dxc5 dxc5 14 ♜f1 ♜d8 15  
 ♜e2 ♜h5 (15...♜e6) 16 a4 ♜b8 17 axb5 axb5 18 g4 ♜f4 19 ♜xf4  
 exf4 20 e5 g6 21 ♜e4 f6 22 ♜xf4 (22 e6) 22...fxe5 23 ♜e3 c4 24  
 ♜g3 ♜b6 25 ♜h6 ♜f8 26 ♜h4 ♜e7 27 ♜g5 ♜xg5 28 ♜xg5 ♜f8 29  
 ♜e3 ♜b7 30 ♜e4 ♜d7 31 h4 ♜b7 32 ♜ae1 ♜d8 33 ♜3e2 ♜e6  
 (33...h5) 34 ♜xe5 ♜f4 35 ♜e3 ♜h3+ 36 ♜g2 ♜xf2 37 ♜f3 ♜xf3 38  
 ♜xf3 ♜xf3+ 39 ♜xf3 ♜f7+ 40 ♜g2 ♜b7+ 41 ♜e4 ♜e7 0-1

**(55) Kan-Botvinnik, January 29, 1954** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜b4  
 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♜a5 6 b4 cxd4 7 ♜g4 ♜e7 8 ♜xg7 ♜g8 9 ♜xh7 ♜c7  
 10 ♜b5 a6 11 ♜xd4 ♜xe5 12 ♜b2 ♜c7 13 ♜ge2 ♜bc6(?) 14 ♜d3  
 ♜d7 15 g3 ♜c8 16 ♜c1 ♜xd4 17 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 18 ♜xd4 ♜f5 19  
 ♜a1 ♜b5 20 a4 ♜c4 21 ♜c3 ♜d7 22 ♜a1 ♜d6 23 ♜b2 d4 24  
 ♜d1 ♜e5 25 ♜d2 ♜d5 26 ♜g1 ♜h4 27 gxh4 ♜xg1 28 f4 ♜e4 29  
 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 30 ♜xd4 ♜h1 31 ♜g3 ♜xh2 32 c4 ♜f3 33 f5 ♜d8 34  
 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 35 fxe6 fxe6 36 a5 ♜e7 37 b5 ♜d6 38 bxa6 bxa6 39  
 c5+ ♜xc5 40 ♜xa6 ♜xh4 41 ♜f2 ♜d5 0-1

**(56) Botvinnik-Kan, January 30, 1954** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5

a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 d6 8 c3 O-O 9 h3 ♜a5  
 10 ♗c2 c5 11 d4 ♜c7 12 ♜bd2 ♗d7 13 ♜f1 ♖fe8 14 ♜e3 ♗f8  
 (14...♖ad8) 15 dxe5 dxe5 16 ♜h2 ♖ad8 17 ♜f3 (17 ♜e2) 17...♗e6  
 18 ♜hg4 ♜xg4 19 hxg4 ♜c4 20 ♜f5 ♜d6 21 g3 ♜b7 22 ♜g2 f6 23  
 ♖h1 ♜f7 24 b3 ♖d7 25 ♜e2 ♖ed8 26 ♜e3 (26 c4) 26...c4 27 bxc4  
 bxc4 28 ♖b1 ♜c7 29 ♜d5 (29 ♖d1) 29...♜a5 30 a4 (30 g5) 30...♗c5  
 31 ♖d1 ♗xd5 32 exd5 g6 33 ♜xc4 ♜d6 34 ♜e2 ♜xc3 35 g5 ♖f7  
 36 ♖b3 ♜a5 37 ♗b2 ♖e8 38 gx6 ♖xf6 39 f3 ♗d4 40 ♗xd4 exd4  
 41 ♜f2 ½-½

**(57) Kan-Botvinnik, February 5, 1954** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 c6 4  
 e4 dxe4 5 ♜xe4 ♗b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♜xd4 7 ♗xb4 ♜xe4+ 8 ♗e2 ♜d7 9  
 ♜f3 c5 10 ♗c3 ♜e7 11 O-O f6 12 ♗d3 ♜f4 13 g3 ♜c7 14 ♜h4  
 O-O 15 ♜c2 (15 ♜h5) 15...g6 16 ♖ae1 ♖f7 17 ♜g2 ♜f8 18 ♜e3  
 (18 f4) 18...h5 19 f4 (19 ♜g2) 19...b6 20 ♜g2 ♗b7 21 ♗e4 ♗xe4  
 22 ♖xe4 ♖d8 23 b3 ♜f5 24 ♖fe1 ♖d6 25 ♖1e2 ♜d8 26 ♜b2 ♜g7  
 27 ♜e1 ♖d1 28 ♜f2 ♜d6 29 ♖4e3 ♜f5 30 ♖e4 ♖fd7 31 ♜f3 ♜f7  
 32 ♜c2 ♜d6 33 ♖4e3 ♜f5 34 ♖e4 ♖1d3 35 ♜e1 ♖3d4 36 ♜f3  
 ♖xe4 37 ♜xe4 ♖d1 38 ♖d2 (38 ♜d2) 38...♖xd2+ 39 ♜xd2 ♜c7(?)  
 40 ♜a8 ♜e7 41 ♜e4 ♜d4 42 b4 f5 43 bxc5 bxc5 44 ♜g5+ ♜g8 45  
 ♜b8 e5 46 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 47 fx5 ♜fe6 48 ♜h3 g5 49 ♜e3 ½-½

**(58) Botvinnik-Kan, February 6, 1954** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 c6 4  
 ♗g2 d5 5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♜c3 ♗g7 7 ♜f3 O-O 8 ♜e5 ♜c6 9 O-O (9  
 ♜xc6) 9...e6 (9...♜xe5) 10 ♜xc6 bxc6 11 ♗f4 ♜d7 12 ♜a4 ♗a6 13  
 ♜d2 ♖e8 14 ♖fc1 e5 15 dxe5 ♜xe5 16 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 17 e3 ♖b8 18  
 ♖ab1 ♗b5 19 ♜c5 ♗d6 20 ♜b3 ♗a4 21 ♜d4 ♗b4 22 ♜d3 c5 23  
 ♜c2 d4 24 ♜xb4 ♖xb4 25 b3 ½-½

**(59) Kan-Botvinnik, February 7, 1954** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♗b5  
 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 d6 8 c3 O-O 9 h3 ♜a5  
 10 ♗c2 c5 11 d4 ♜c7 12 ♜bd2 ♜c6 13 d5 ♜a5 14 ♜f1 ♜b7 15 g4  
 c4 16 ♜g3 a5 17 ♗d2 ♜c5 18 ♜h2 ♜b6 19 ♗e3 b4 20 ♜d2 ♗a6  
 21 ♜f5 ♗d8 22 ♖g1 ♜c7 23 ♜f3 ♜fd7 24 h4 ♖b8 25 ♗h6 gxh6 26  
 g5 h5 27 ♜xh5 ♜h8 28 g6 fxg6 29 ♖xg6 ♜f6 30 ♜h6 ♜g8 31 ♜h5  
 ♜f6 32 ♜h6 ♜g8 33 ♜h5 ♜d7 34 ♖g7 ♜df6 35 ♜f3 ♜xg7 36  
 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 37 ♖g1+ ♜h8 38 ♜g2 ♖b7 39 ♗d1 ♖bf7 40 ♜h1  
 ♜h6 0-1 (2.17 - 1.43)

**(60) Kan-Botvinnik, February 10, 1954** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 d5 c4 11 dxe6 fxe6 12 ♗c2 ♗b7 (12...♗c7) 13 O-O ♗c7 14 ♗e2 (14 e5) 14...♗d6 (14...♗c5) 15 ♗g5 O-O 16 ♗ad1 ♗ae8 17 ♗fe1 ♗g4 18 h3 ♗ge5 19 ♗d4 ♗c5(?) 20 ♗e3 ♗xd4(?) 21 ♗xd4 ♗c5 22 ♗e3 ♗cd3 23 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 24 ♗d2 ♗d8 25 ♗ed1 ♗xd2 26 ♗xd2 ♗f7 27 ♗e3 ♗c6 28 f3 e5 29 ♗e2 ♗e7 30 a3 ♗d8 31 ♗d5 ♗a5 32 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 33 f4 ♗c6 34 fxe5 ♗xe5 35 ♗a7 ♗c7 36 ♗d4 g6 37 ♗f2 ♗f7 38 ♗e3 ♗d7 39 ♗f3 ♗c5 40 h4 ♗e7 41 ♗d4 ♗d7 ½-½ (1.55 - 2.05)

**(61) Botvinnik-Kan, February 13, 1954** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♗c3 ♗c6 6 ♗f4 e6 7 e3 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 O-O 9 h3 ♗d7 10 O-O ♗b6 11 ♗e2 ♗fc8 12 ♗ac1 ♗e8 13 ♗fd1 ♗d8 14 ♗e5 a6 15 ♗e1 b5 (15...♗a5) 16 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 17 ♗e2 ♗ac8 18 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 19 ♗c1 b4 20 ♗b1 a5 21 ♗d3 ♗c8 22 ♗c1 ♗b5 23 ♗g5 h6 24 ♗h4 g5 25 ♗g3 ♗e4 26 ♗h2 ♗xd3 27 ♗xd3 ♗d6 28 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 ½-½

**(62) Botvinnik-Averbakh, June 6, 1955** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e3 O-O 5 ♗d3 d5 6 ♗f3 c5 7 O-O ♗c6 8 a3 ♗a5 9 cxd5 exd5 10 dxc5 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♗g4 12 c4 (12 ♗e2 ♗e4 13 ♗b2 ♗xc5 14 c4 dxc4 15 ♗xc4 ♗xd1 16 ♗axd1 ♗a4 17 ♗a1) 12...♗e5 13 cxd5 ♗xf3+ 14 gxf3 ♗h3 15 e4 ♗d7 16 ♗h1 ♗xf1 17 ♗xf1 ♗xc5 18 ♗e3 b6 19 e5 ♗d7 20 f4 ♗fd8 21 ♗g2 ♗ac8 (21...g6) 22 ♗f3 ♗b3 (22...♗a4) 23 ♗d1 ♗c3 24 f5 ♗c5 25 f6 ♗d3 26 ♗g1 g6 27 ♗f4 ♗e8 28 ♗xc5 bxc5 29 ♗e1 ♗3xd5 30 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 31 ♗h6 ♗f8 32 ♗h3 ♗d8 33 e6 1-0

**(63) Averbakh-Botvinnik, June 23, 1955** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 e6 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 d5 c4 (10...♗b6) 11 dxe6 fxe6 12 ♗c2 ♗b7 (12...♗c7) 13 O-O ♗c7 14 ♗d4 ♗c5 15 ♗e2 e5 16 ♗d5 ♗xd5 17 exd5 ♗xd5 (17...♗d6) 18 ♗f4 ♗d6 19 ♗f5 O-O 20 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 21 ♗xe5 ♗c6 22 ♗g4 ♗a7 (22...♗f7) 23 ♗d4 ♗af7 24 ♗h5 ♗d3 25 ♗fd1 ♗xg2 26 ♗xd3 cxd3 27 ♗b3 ♗f3 28 ♗g5 ♗g6 29 ♗xg6 hxg6 30 ♗e3

♖d8 31 ♗xf7+ ♜xf7 32 ♗d2 ♜h8 33 ♜e1 ♜h4 34 ♜e3 ♜g4+ 35 ♜f1 ♗e2+ 36 ♜xe2 dxe2+ 37 ♜xe2 ♜h4 38 ♜f3 ♜xh2 0-1

**(64) Averbakh-Botvinnik, December 23, 1955** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 b6 7 ♗d3 ♗b7 8 f3 ♗c6 9 ♗e2 O-O 10 e4 ♗e8 11 O-O ♗a5 12 ♗g3 ♗a6 13 f4 f5 (-) 14 exf5 cxd4 15 cxd4 ♗xc4 16 a4 exf5 (-) 17 ♗a3 ♜f7 18 ♗xf5 d5 19 ♜e1 ♗xd3 20 ♜xd3 ♗c4 21 ♗e7+ ♜h8 22 ♗c6 ♜f6 (22...♜c8) 23 ♗e5 ♜c7 24 ♜f3 ♜d8 25 ♜a2 ♜g8 (25...♗xa3) 26 ♜ae2 ♗xa3 27 ♜xa3 ♜d6 (27...♗d6) 28 ♜b3 ♗f6 29 g4 ♜dc8 30 g5 ♗e4 31 ♜xe4 ♜c3 32 ♜a2 ♜a3 33 ♗f7 ♜xf7 34 ♜e7+ ♜g8 35 ♜e2 ♜f8 36 ♜e8 ♜c3 37 f5 ♜c8 38 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 39 ♜e6+ ♜xe6 40 fxe6 ♜e8 41 ♜g2 ½-½

**(65) Averbakh-Botvinnik, December 30, 1955** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♗d3 d5 6 ♗f3 O-O 7 O-O ♗bd7 8 a3 dxc4 (8...cxd4 9 ♗xd5!) 9 ♗xc4 cxd4 10 exd4 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♜c7 12 ♜e2 b6 13 ♗d3 (13 ♗d2) 13...♗b7 (13...♜xc3) 14 c4 (14 ♗d2) 14...♗g4 15 g3 ♜fe8 16 ♗g5 ♗gf6 17 f4 e5 18 fxe5 ♗xe5 19 dxe5 (19 ♗f4) 19...♜xe5 20 ♜f2 ♜xg5 21 ♗xg5 ♜c6 22 ♜f3 ♜xf3 23 ♜xf3 ♗xf3 24 ♗xf6 (24 ♜e1) 24...gxf6 25 ♜f1 ♗h5 (25...♗b7 26 ♜f2) 26 ♜xf6 ♜d8 27 ♗e4 ♜d4 28 ♜f4 ♜g7 29 ♗d5 ♜d3 30 g4 ♗g6 31 h4 h5 32 gxh5 ♗xh5 33 a4 ♜a3 34 ♗c6 ♗d1 35 c5 bxc5 36 ♜c4 ♜a1 (36...♗b3) 37 ♜f2 (37 ♜xc5) 37...♜a2+ 38 ♜e3 (38 ♜g3) 38...♜c2 39 ♜f4 ♗h5 40 ♜d3 ♜c1 Unfinished

**(66) Averbakh-Botvinnik, June 7, 1956** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 d6 6 ♗g5 e6 7 ♜d2 a6 8 O-O-O ♗d7 9 f4 ♗e7 10 ♗f3 b5 11 ♗xf6 gxg6 12 f5 ♜a5 13 ♜b1 ♗e5 14 ♗xe5 fxe5 15 f6 ♗f8 16 g4 ♜c8? 17 ♜g1 b4 18 ♗e2 d5 19 exd5 exd5 20 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 21 ♜xd5 ♜c5 22 ♜d2 ♜c6 23 g5 h6 24 ♗g2 ♜d6 25 ♜xd6 ♗xd6 26 g6 fxg6 27 ♗d5 g5 28 ♗g3 ♜f8 29 ♗e4 ♗c7? 30 ♜f1 ♗h3 31 ♜f2 a5 32 c4 bxc3 33 bxc3 ♜d7 34 f7 ♜e7 35 ♜f6 h5 36 ♜c6 ♜b8+ 37 ♜c2 ♗b6 38 f8=♜+ ♜xf8 39 ♜f6+ ♜g7 40 ♜f7+ ♜g6 Unfinished

**(67) Botvinnik-Averbakh, June 9, 1956** 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 f5 4 ♗c3 fxe4 5 ♗xe4 ♗e7 6 ♗xc6 dxc6 7 d3 ♗f6 8 ♜e2 ♗g4 9 h3

♖xf3 10 ♜xf3 ♜d5 11 ♗g5 ♜xe4 12 dxe4 ♜f7 13 ♜xf7+ ♜xf7 14  
 ♗e3 ♜e6 15 ♜e2 ♜hf8 16 h4 ♜f7 17 h5 h6 18 ♜h3 ♗g5 19 ♜d1  
 ♜af8 20 f3 a5 21 ♜g3 ♜f6 22 ♜g4 a4 23 g3 ♜e6 24 ♜f1 ♗xe3 25  
 ♜xe3 ♜d7 26 f4 ♜f6 27 ♜g6 ♜f7 28 fxe5 ♜xf1 29 e6+ ♜e7 30  
 exd7 1-0

**(68) Botvinnik-Averbakh, April 1, 1956** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3  
 ♗b4 4 e3 O-O 5 ♜e2 d5 6 a3 ♗e7 7 cxd5 ♜xd5 8 ♜xd5 exd5 9 g3  
 ♜e8 10 ♗g2 c6 11 O-O ♗g5 12 b4 ♜d7 (12...a6) 13 b5 ♜b6 14  
 bxc6 bxc6 15 ♗d2 ♗a6 (15...♜c4) 16 ♜e1 ♜c4 17 ♜c1 ♜b8 18  
 ♗b4 ♗b5 19 ♜d3 a5 20 ♗c5 g6 21 ♜c2 ♜d7 22 a4 ♗a6 23 ♜e5  
 ♜xe5 24 dxe5 ♗c4 25 ♗f1 ♗xf1 26 ♜xf1 ♜xe5 27 ♜c3 ♜e4 28  
 ♜xa5 ♜c8 29 ♗d4 ♗e7 30 ♜d2 ♗b4 31 ♜d3 c5 32 ♗b2 ♜c6 33  
 ♜fd1 ♗a5 34 ♜a2 ♜xa4 35 ♜xa4 ♜xa4 36 ♗e5 ♜e8 37 ♜a1 ♜e4  
 38 ♜xe4 dxe4 39 ♜xa5 ♜xe5 40 ♜a8+ ♜g7 41 f4 exf3 42 ♜f2  
 ♜d5 43 ♜xf3 ♜d2 44 h4 h5 45 ♜c8 ♜c2 46 ♜c6 c4 47 e4 c3 48 e5  
 ♜c1 49 ♜g2 ♜f8 50 e6 fxe6 51 ♜xe6 ♜d1 52 ♜c6 ♜d3 53 ♜xg6  
 ♜e7 54 ♜c6 ♜d7 55 ♜c4 ♜d6 56 g4 ♜d5 57 ♜c7 ½-½

**(69) Averbakh-Botvinnik, August 3, 1956** 1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4  
 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 d6 6 ♗c4 e6 7 a3 ♗e7 8 O-O O-O 9 ♗a2  
 (9 ♗e3 d5) 9...♗d7 (9...♜c7) 10 ♗e3 ♜xd4 11 ♗xd4 b5 12 ♜d3  
 a5 13 ♜xb5 ♜xe4 14 a4 ♗c6 15 ♜ad1 d5 (15...♜d7) 16 c4 dxc4  
 17 ♗xc4 ♜b8 18 ♜f3 ♜b7 19 ♜fe1 ♜fd8 20 ♗d3 ♜f6 21 ♜h3 h6  
 22 ♗c4 ♜d7 23 ♗e5 ♜ad8 24 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 25 ♜g3 ♗d5 26 ♗e2  
 ♜e8 27 ♜c1 ♗g5 28 f4 ♗f6 29 ♗f1 ♗d8 30 h3 ♗e4 31 ♜h2 h5 32  
 ♜c3 ♗b6 33 b4 ♜a8 34 bxa5 ♗xa5 35 ♜c8 ♜d8 36 ♜xa8 ♜xa8  
 37 g3 ♜d8 38 ♗c3 ♗xc3 39 ♜xc3 ♜d2+ 40 ♜g1 (2.03) 40...♜f8  
 (1.59) 41 a5 ♗b7 42 ♜a3 ♜d1 43 ♜b3 ♗a6 44 ♜b1 ♜d5 45 ♜b5  
 g5 46 fxg5 ♜xg5 47 ♜f2 ♜f5+ 48 ♜e3 ♗xb5 49 ♗xb5 ♜d6 50  
 ♗d3 ♜e5+ 51 ♜d4 ♜xa5 52 g4 hxg4 53 hxg4 ♜a4+ 54 ♜c5 ♜xg4  
 0-1

**(70) Botvinnik-Averbakh, August 3, 1956** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3  
 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♜e2 cxd4 6 exd4 O-O 7 a3 ♗e7 8 d5 exd5 9 cxd5  
 ♗c5? 10 ♜d4 ♜e8+ 11 ♗e2 (11 ♗e3) 11...♜e4 (11...♜g4) 12 ♜xe4  
 ♜xe4 13 ♜b5 d6 14 O-O a6 15 ♜c3 ♜e8 16 ♜h1 ♜d7 17 ♗f4 ♜f6  
 18 ♗g3 ♗d4 19 ♜c1 ♜c5 20 ♗xd6 ♗xc3 21 ♗xc5 ♗xb2 22 ♜c2



♖e5 23 d6 ♜d8 24 ♜d2 ♜f5? 25 f4 ♜c3 26 ♜d4 ♜xd4 27 ♜xd4  
 ♜ac8 28 ♜f3 b5? 29 ♜e1 ♜e6 30 ♜d2 ♜c4 31 ♜d1 g6 32 ♜e3  
 ♜g7 33 g4 h6 34 g5 ♜f5 35 ♜e4 ♜h3 36 ♜xh3 ♜xh3 37 ♜xc4  
 bxc4 38 ♜g1 hxg5 39 fxg5 f6 40 gxf6+ ♜xf6 41 ♜f2 ½-½

**(71) Averbakh-Botvinnik, August 6, 1956** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜d2  
 ♜f6 4 e5 ♜fd7 (4...♜g8) 5 ♜d3 c5 6 c3 b6 7 ♜e2 ♜a6 8 ♜xa6  
 ♜xa6 9 O-O ♜c7 10 ♜g3 h5 (10...♜e7) 11 ♜f3 ♜e7 12 ♜e3 ♜b8  
 (12...c4) 13 ♜e1 g6 14 ♜d3 c4 15 ♜e1 ♜c6 16 ♜d2 b5 17 ♜f3 a5  
 18 ♜g5 ♜xg5 19 ♜xg5 b4 20 h4 ♜e7 21 a4 ♜d7 22 ♜fe1 ♜hb8  
 23 ♜e3 bxc3 24 bxc3 ♜b3 25 ♜f3 ♜d8 26 ♜f4 ♜e8 27 ♜h7 ♜d7  
 28 ♜g5 ♜c6 29 ♜f1 ♜ab8 30 ♜c1 ♜e8 31 ♜e3 ♜g7 32 ♜f6 ♜e8  
 33 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 34 ♜f4 ♜c6 35 d5+ ♜b7 36 ♜xc4 ♜a8 37 ♜f4  
 ♜c7 38 d6 ♜xc4 39 ♜xc4 ♜b1+ 40 ♜xb1 ♜xb1+ (1.58/2.04) 41  
 ♜h2 ♜b8 42 ♜c5 ♜b7 43 ♜e4 f6 44 exf6 ♜f7 45 ♜xa5 ♜d7 46  
 ♜b5+ ♜c8 47 ♜c5 ♜xd6 48 a5 ♜c7 49 ♜b6 ♜xb6 50 axb6 ♜e8 51  
 ♜xe6 ♜xf6 52 c4 ♜e5 53 c5 ♜c6 54 f3 ♜d7 55 ♜f8+ ♜e8 56 ♜xg6  
 ♜d7 57 ♜f4 ♜xc5 58 ♜xh5 ♜d7 59 b7 ♜f7 60 g4 ♜c5 Unfinished  
 (3.22 - 3.00)

**(72) Averbakh-Botvinnik, December 25, 1956** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 g6 3  
 ♜c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♜xd5 5 e4 ♜xc3 6 bxc3 ♜g7 7 ♜c4 O-O? 8 ♜e2 c5  
 9 O-O ♜c6 10 ♜e3 ♜c7 11 ♜c1 b6 12 ♜d2 ♜b7 13 ♜h6 ♜ad8 14  
 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 15 ♜e3 e5 16 ♜b5 ♜a5 17 ♜g3 ♜e7 18 dxе5 ♜xe5  
 19 ♜fd1 ♜e7 20 ♜f4 ♜c6 21 ♜e2 ♜xd1+ 22 ♜xd1 ♜d8 23 ♜xd8  
 ♜xd8 24 h4 ♜f6 25 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 26 f4 ♜e7 27 ♜f2 ♜c8 28 ♜f1  
 ♜e6 29 a3 f5 30 e5 h5 31 ♜e3 ½-½

**(73) Averbakh-Botvinnik, December 8, 1957** 1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3  
 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♜f6 5 O-O ♜e7 6 ♜e1 b5 7 ♜b3 O-O 8 c3 d6 9 h3  
 ♜a5 10 ♜c2 c5 11 d4 ♜c7 12 ♜bd2 ♜c6 (12...♜fd8) 13 dxc5 dxc5  
 14 ♜f1 ♜e6 15 ♜e3 ♜ad8 16 ♜e2 g6 17 ♜g5 ♜c8 18 ♜f3 h6 19  
 ♜d5 ♜d6 20 ♜d1 hxg5 21 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 22 ♜xg5 ♜g7 23 ♜d5  
 ♜xd5 24 exd5 ♜b8 25 a4 ♜bd7 26 axb5 axb5 27 c4 bxc4 28 ♜a4  
 ♜d6 29 ♜c6 ♜b8 30 ♜a8 ♜xc6 31 dxc6 ♜d5 0-1

**(74) Botvinnik-Averbakh, January 9, 1957** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3  
 ♜c3 ♜b4 4 e3 c5 5 a3 ♜xc3+ 6 bxc3 b6 7 ♜e2 ♜c6 8 ♜g3 O-O 9

e4 ♖e8 10 ♗e2 ♗a6 11 O-O ♗a5 12 f4 ♗xc4 13 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 14 f5  
 f6 15 ♖b1 cxd4 (15...♖c8) 16 cxd4 e5 17 ♗h5 ♖e7 18 dxe5 ♖c5+  
 19 ♖h1 ♗xe5 20 ♗e3 ♖c6 21 ♗f4 ♖xe4 22 ♖b4 ♖b7 23 ♗d5 ♖f7  
 24 ♖b3 ♖a6 25 ♖d1 ♖e2 26 ♗f4 ♖a6 27 ♗d5 ♖e2 28 ♗f4 ♖a6  
 ½-½

**(75) Averbakh-Botvinnik, January 19, 1957** 1 d4 e6 2 ♗f3 f5 3 g3  
 ♗f6 4 ♗g2 ♗e7 5 O-O O-O 6 c4 d5 7 b3 ♗c6 8 ♗b2 ♗d7 9 ♗c3  
 ♗e4 10 cxd5 ♗xc3 11 ♗xc3 exd5 12 ♗e5 ♗e6 13 ♗d3 a5 14 ♖c1  
 ♗d6 15 e3 ♗b4 16 ♗xb4 axb4 17 ♖d2 c6 18 ♖c2 ♖b6 19 f4 g6 20  
 ♗f3 ♖f7 21 ♖f2 ♖c7 22 ♖g2 c5 23 dxc5 ♗xc5 24 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 25  
 ♖d4 ♖ac8 26 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 27 ♖d2 ♖xd4 28 ♖xd4 ♖c1+ 29 ♖f2  
 ♖c2+ 30 ♖e1 ♖xa2 31 ♖xb4 ♖a7 32 ♖d2 ♖a2+ 33 ♖d3 ♖f2 34  
 ♖b6 ♗f7 35 b4 g5 36 ♗e2 gxf4 37 gxf4 d4 38 ♖xb7 dxe3 39 ♖xe3  
 ♖xh2 40 b5 ♗d5 41 ♖c7 ♖h6 (1.29/2.04) 42 ♖d4 ♗e4 43 ♗c4+  
 ♖f8 44 ♖e5 1-0

**(76) Botvinnik-Averbakh, January 21, 1957** 1 c4 c5 2 ♗c3 ♗c6 3  
 g3 g6 4 ♗g2 ♗g7 5 a3 a6 (5...e6) 6 ♖b1 ♖b8 7 b4 cxb4 8 axb4 b5  
 9 cxb5 (9 c5) 9...axb5 10 h4 h6 11 e4 e5 12 ♗ge2 d6 13 d3 ♗ge7  
 14 h5 g5 15 f4 exf4 16 gxf4 ♗g4 17 ♖d2 gxf4 18 ♖xf4 (18 ♗xf4)  
 18...♖d7 19 ♗e3 ♗e5 20 O-O ♗xh5 (20...f5) 21 ♗g3 ♖g4 22 ♗f5  
 ♗xf5 (22...♖g8) 23 exf5 ♖xf4 24 ♖xf4 ♗g4 25 ♗d5 ♗xe3 26 ♖e1  
 ♖d7 27 ♖xe3 ♖he8 28 ♖h3 ♗d1 (28...♗e2) 29 f6 ♗f8 30 d4  
 ♖e1+ 31 ♖h2 h5 32 ♖a3 ♗h6 33 ♖a7+ ♖e8 34 ♖f2 ♖f8 35 ♖fa2  
 ♗b3 36 ♖b2 ♗c4 37 ♖f2 ♗d3 38 ♖e7 ♖a1 39 ♗e4 ♗c4 40 ♗f4  
 ♖d1 41 d5 ♗xf4+ (2.19/2.00) 42 ♖xf4 ♖e8 43 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 44  
 ♖f5 ♖d4 45 ♗g2 h4 46 ♖h5 ♖f4 47 ♖h6 ♖d8 48 ♖h3 ♖d7 49  
 ♖xh4 ♖xf6 50 ♖g3 ♖g6+ 51 ♖g4 ♖e7 52 ♗e4 ♖h6 53 ♖g5 ♖h8  
 54 ♖f4 ♖a8 55 ♖e3 ♖a4 56 ♖f5 ♖xb4 0-1

**(77) Averbakh-Botvinnik, January 24, 1957** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3  
 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 d6 6 ♗g5 e6 7 ♖d2 a6 8 O-O-O h6 9  
 ♗h4 ♗xe4 10 ♖f4 g5 11 ♖xe4 gxh4 12 ♗xc6 bxc6 13 ♖xc6+ ♗d7  
 14 ♖e4 ♖g8 (14...♖c8!) 15 f4 (15 ♗d5) 15...♖c8 16 f5 ♗c6  
 (16...♖xc3) 17 ♖e3 (17 ♖d3) 17...♖g5 18 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 19 ♗xa6  
 ♖a8 20 ♗b5 ♗xb5 21 ♗xb5 ♖xa2 22 ♖b1 ♖a5 23 ♗xd6+ ♗xd6

24 ♖xd6 ♖axf5 25 ♖d2 ♖d5 26 ♖e2 ♜d7? 27 ♖f1 ♖gf5 28 ♖ef2  
 ♖xf2 29 ♖xf2 ♖d1+ 30 ♜a2 f5 31 ♜b3 (31 h3) 31...h3 32 g×h3  
 ♜d6 33 ♜b4 ♜e5 34 c4 f4 35 c5 ♖c1 36 ♖f3 ♜e4 37 ♖c3 0-1

**(78) Botvinnik-Averbakh, January 25, 1957** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3  
 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♗f3 dxc4 5 a4 ♗f5 6 ♗e5 e6 7 f3 ♗b4 8 ♗xc4 ♗d5 9  
 ♗d2 ♗b6 10 e4 ♗g6 11 h4 ♗e7 12 h5 ♗h4+ 13 ♜e2 ♗xc4 14  
 h×g6 f×g6 15 ♗c1 ♗e7 16 ♜f2 (16 g3) 16...♗d6 17 ♜b3 (17 g3)  
 17...♜b6 18 ♜xe6 ♜xd4+ 19 ♗e3 ♜f6 20 ♜b3 ♗d7 21 ♗e2 g5 22  
 g3 ♜f7 23 ♜xf7+ ♗xf7 24 ♖ad1 ♗c5 25 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 26 b4 ♗e6 27  
 b5 ♜e7 28 a5 a6 29 bxc6 bxc6 30 ♗a4 ♗e5 31 ♜e3 h5 32 ♗b6  
 ♖af8 33 ♖hf1 ♗c5 34 ♖c1 ♗cd7 (34...♗e6) 35 ♗xd7 ♜xd7 36  
 ♖fd1+ ♜c7 37 ♖c5 ♖e8 38 f4 gxf4+ 39 gxf4 ♗g4+ 40 ♗xg4 h×g4  
 41 e5 ♖d8 42 ♖g1 g5 43 f×g5 ♖hg8 44 ♖xg4 ♖d1 45 g6 ♜d7 46  
 g7 ♜e6 47 ♖g5 ♖e1+ 48 ♜f2 1-0

**(79) Averbakh-Botvinnik, January 29, 1957** 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3  
 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 O-O ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 O-O 8 c3 d6 9 h3  
 ♗d7 10 d4 ♗b6 (10...♗b7) 11 ♗bd2 ♗f6 12 ♗f1 ♗a5 13 ♗c2 c5  
 14 ♗g3 (14 dxc5) 14...cxd4 15 cxd4 ♗c6 16 d5 (16 dxe5) 16...♗b4  
 17 ♗b1 a5 18 ♗h5 ♗e7 19 g4 g6 20 ♗g3 ♖e8 21 b3 ♗a6 22 ♗d3  
 (22 ♗e3) 22...♗d7 23 ♜e2 ♗b4 24 ♗b1 ♜b8 25 ♜d2? ♗a6 26  
 ♜h6 f6 (26...♗f8) 27 g5 ♜d8 28 ♗h5 ♗f8 29 ♗xf6+ ♜xf6 30 gxf6  
 ♗xh6 31 ♗xh6 ♖f8 32 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 33 ♖e3 ♗c5 34 ♗e1 ♖xf6 35  
 ♗d3 ♜f8 36 ♗c2 ♜e7 37 ♖c1 ♖f8 38 ♗d1 ♖c8 39 a3 b4 40 axb4  
 ♗xd3 41 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 42 ♖xd3 axb4 43 h4 ♗a7 44 f3 ♗b5 45 ♜f2  
 ♗c3 1-0

**(80) Botvinnik-Averbakh, January 30, 1957** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3  
 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 b6 7 ♗d3 ♗b7 8 f3 ♗c6 9  
 ♗h3 d6 (9...♖c8) 10 ♗b2 (10 0-0) 10...♜c7 11 e4 e5 12 d5 ♗a5 13  
 ♗c1 h6 14 ♗e3 O-O-O 15 a4 ♗a6 16 ♜e2 g5 17 ♗f2 ♖dg8 18  
 ♗d1 h5 19 ♗f2 h4 20 ♗e3 ♗h5 21 g4½-½

**(81) Botvinnik-Furman, October 9, 1960**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

**1 e4 c5**

2 ♖f3 e6  
 3 d3 ...

Botvinnik decides to avoid a theoretical discussion and chooses a quiet line of the closed Sicilian.

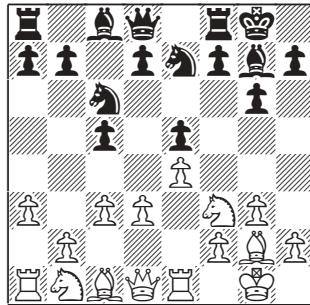
3 ... ♗c6  
 4 g3 g6  
 5 ♗g2 ♗g7  
 6 O-O ♗ge7  
 7 ♖e1 (7 Qe2) ...  
 7 ... O-O  
 8 c3 ...

Preparing for 9 d4, while 8...d5 can be met by 9 e5.

8 ... e5

The right response. Black prevents the push d2-d4 at the cost of one tempo. This tempo, however, is unimportant, because it is not clear that in the closed positions that will arise that the Rook is better posted on e1 than f1.

9 a3 ...



9 ... d5

But now the tempo becomes important! The text move is a serious mistake, since Black enters a reversed King's Indian a tempo down, so

compared with the regular King's Indian he is two tempi down. The normal move is 9...d6, keeping a solid pawn chain. The game could then continue: 10 b4 h6 11 ♖bd2 b6 12 ♗b2 ♗b7 13 ♝b3 ♝d7 14 ♜ad1 ♜ad8 15 ♘c4 b5 16 ♙e3 a6 with a complicated game and approximately equal chances (Lau-Hübner, Munich 1988, with a slight transposition of moves). It is impressive to see how Botvinnik takes advantage of Black's mistake.

**10 b4      d×e4**

It is already hard to suggest a better move, because White would otherwise be able to exert enormous pressure against the Black center.

**11 d×e4      ♝×d1**  
**12 ♜×d1      ♜d8**

Exchanging another heavy piece, which will, however, not alleviate White's pressure.

**13 ♜×d8+      ♘×d8**  
**14 ♗e3 (14 ♗×c5!?)**

There is no need to take the c-pawn. White's strategy is to force Black to take on b4. Then he will take with his a-pawn and the half-open a-file will just increase the pressure.

**14 ...      ♙e6**  
**15 ♖bd2      ♙c6**  
**16 ♘c4      ...**

White is building up the pressure. He threatens 17 b5, winning the e-pawn.

**16 ...      c×b4**

Black is giving in. There was hardly any choice, because after 16...b5 17 ♙d6 it would have been impossible to protect the weak b- and c-

pawns at the same time.

**17 a×b4      ♖c7**

Black temporarily keeps control on the queenside. He will have to surrender the Bishop pair, however.

**18 ♖d6      ...**

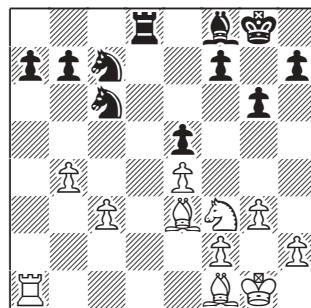
With the main threat of 19 b5, so Black's reply is forced.

**18 ...      ♕f8**  
**19 ♖×c8 (19 ♕f1)**  
**19 ...      ♖×c8**  
**20 ♕h3      ...**

Another subtle move. Before retreating the Bishop of f1, he chases the Rook away from c8. Superficially, the d-file seems to be the more active post for the Rook, but a closer look reveals that it has no square available on the open file.

**20 ...      ♖d8**  
**21 ♕f1      ...**

Everything fits in place. White not only keeps the black Rook from entering on d3, he also threatens 22 b5 again. If Black prevents this by 21...a6, then 22 ♕b6 ♖d7 23 ♕h3 is highly unpleasant.



**21 ...      b6**

Black collapses under pressure. The only move was 21...b5 in order to

stop White's expansion on the Queenside for the time being. It is actually a pity that Furman did not play this, because it would have been interesting to see how Botvinnik in that case would have converted his positional trumps into a win.

A good starting move would be 22 ♖d2 to bring the Knight to the queenside. White's strategical superiority leaps to the eye. Both Black queenside pawns are permanently weak, while White's pieces have many squares at their disposal. Black's pieces on the other hand are restricted to defensive purposes. It is understandable that Black subconsciously had no desire to test White's technical skills any further.

<b>22 b5</b>	♗a5
<b>23 ♖×e5</b>	♕g7
<b>24 ♖c6</b>	...

Crushing.

<b>24 ...</b>	♖×c6
<b>25 b×c6</b>	♗d6
<b>26 ♖×a7</b>	♖×c6
<b>27 c4</b>	...

With the simple threat of 28 ♖b7, winning the b-pawn.

<b>27 ...</b>	♖e6
<b>28 ♖a8+</b>	♕f8
<b>29 ♖b8</b>	♖c5
<b>30 ♕h6</b>	♖e6
<b>31 e5</b>	...

Horrible torture.

<b>31 ...</b>	♖g7
<b>32 ♕e3</b>	♖e6
<b>33 f4</b>	1-0 (1.39 - 1.29)

Black resigned. A strategically model game.

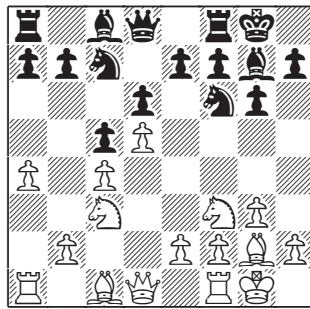
**(82) Furman-Botvinnik, October 10, 1960** 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 ♕g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 O-O 6 ♗e3 b6 7 ♗ge2 c5 8 d5 e6 9 ♗c1 (9 ♗f4!) 9...exd5 10 cxd5 ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♗xa6 12 O-O ♗c7 13 a4 ♗d7? 14 ♗1e2 a6 15 ♖b1 b5 16 axb5 (16 b4!) 16...♗xb5 17 ♗xb5 (17 ♗a4) 17...axb5 18 b4 c4 19 ♗d4 ♗xd4 20 ♖xd4 f6 21 ♖a1 ♖c7 22 ♖c3 (22 ♖f2) 22...♗f7 23 ♗d4 ♖b7 24 f4 (24 ♖a5) 24...♖xa1 25 ♖xa1 ♖a8 26 ♖e1 ♖e8 27 ♖h3 ♗g8 28 ♖a1 ♖xe4 29 ♗f2 ♗f8 30 g3 (30 ♖c3) 30...c3 31 ♖c1 ♖xb4 32 ♗e1 ♖xd5 0-1 (2.07 - 1.51)

**(83) Furman-Botvinnik, January 7, 1961**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

1 d4	♗f6
2 c4	c5
3 d5	d6
4 ♗c3	g6
5 ♗f3	♕g7
6 g3	O-O
7 ♗g2	♗a6
8 O-O	♗c7
9 a4	...

So far all is established theory. White prevents the push b7-b5 before developing his Queen's Bishop.



9 ... ♗a6

This approach is completely unknown. The usual moves are 9...♖b8, 9...e5, 9...h6 and 9...e6. The idea of the text move is obviously to bring the Knight to b4. This plan is of dubious value for two reasons: (1) The Knight manoeuvre take as lot of time; and (2) It is not quite clear whether



the Knight is will posted on b4. Only if Black could combine it with actions along an open file would the position of the Knight be good. Otherwise it will be cut off from the defense. It is only thanks to Botvinnik's great resourcefulness and deep insight that he will be able to survive after the Knight manoeuvre.

**10 ♖f4      ♗h5**  
 (10...♗b4 11 ♖d2!)

Botvinnik gives one of his concise, sober comments: 10...♗b4 11 ♖d2!. This is indeed true. White would then follow up with 12 ♖h6 and have a strong bind. Therefore Black must, at all costs, try to confuse matters and fight for the initiative. The text move is part of this plan.

**11 ♖e3      e5**  
**12 d×e6      ...**

Forced, otherwise White would get no grip on the position.

**12 ...      ♖×e6**  
**13 ♗d2      ♖d7**  
**14 ♗d5      ...**

Forceful play. White is ready to sacrifice his b-pawn in order to establish his superiority in the center.

**14 ...      ♖×d5**

Positional rules don't apply anymore. Black gives up his Bishop pair, including the vital white-squared Bishop, in order to create counterplay.

**15 ♖×d5      ♗b4**  
**16 ♗e4      ...**

Furman is playing the early middlegame very well. He puts all his pieces on the most active squares, putting Black in an unenviable position.

**16 ...      ♖×b2**

What else is there to do? Black takes a pawn and prays that he will survive the storm.

**17 ♖b1 ♔e5**

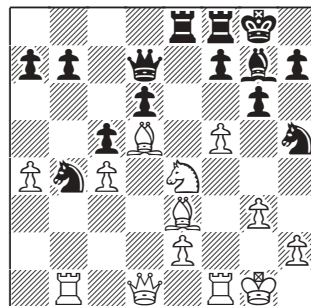
Both players keep on adding fuel to the fire. Otherwise the lesser evil was 17...♗g7, although after 18 ♕xd6! ♕xd5 19 ♖d5 b6 20 ♗b5, White can boast of a clear positional advantage. Botvinnik was probably well aware of this, especially the nature of White's advantage: He was most skillful winning such positions as White. The text move gives White the opportunity to launch a very dangerous offensive. Still, Black will not be without resources and White will have to calculate very well, as we shall see.

**18 f4 ♗g7**  
**19 f5! ...**

Now the variation with 19 ♕xd6 would make little sense, because White would have a weakened Kingside. The next move, however, clearly shows that White's previous move was purposeful.. Black is hard pressed and will have to walk a tightrope.

**19 ... ♖ae8!**

Cold-blooded defense. Black could not play 19...gxf5 because then 20 ♕xd6 would be crushing. Therefore he's looking for a tactical response to White's direct threats. The fact that the Bishop on e3 is unprotected makes it best for White to try to crash through Black's defenses.



**20 ♖×b4 ...**

The game is reaching its climax. White sacrifices an exchange to keep his strong Bishop on d5 and to obtain square d4 for the other Bishop. This attractive plan makes Black's defense tough.

Other moves were less suited to cause trouble. I examine the alternatives: (a) 20 g4?! ♗×d5 21 ♜×d5 ♞e5 22 ♜d3 and Black is doing very well; (b) 20 f6. The crucial alternative. Black can take the pawn in two different ways: (i) 20... ♗×g6 21 ♞×f6 ♞×e4 22 ♗×e4 ♗×f6 23 ♗×c5 or 21... ♗×d5 22 ♜×d5 ♞×e4 23 ♞×b7 ♜e8 24 ♞ff7!, in both cases with advantage to White; (ii) 20... ♗×f6! 21 ♞×f6 ♗×d5 22 ♜×d5 ♞×e4 23 ♞×d6 ♜e8 and Black gets a good position, both after 24 ♗×c5 b6 and 24 ♗h6 ♗g7.

**20 ... c×b4**  
**21 ♗×a7 ...**

Before bringing his Bishop to d4, he first takes a pawn on the Queenside. Superficially the move looks wrong, because Black can now get two connected passed pawns on the Queenside.

Furman, however, has judged the situation very sharply: Black will need two moves to create the passed pawns, so in fact he wins one tempo, compared with the immediate 21 ♗d4. And this tempo will obviously be very valuable in the offensive that White has started. Besides, Black's Queenside's pawns will not be threatening for a while, because of White's superior central control.

**21 ... b5**  
**22 ♗d4 ♞×e4!**

Botvinnik is on his guard. He sacrifices back the exchange, because after 23... b×a4 24 ♗×g7 ♜×g7 25 ♜d4+ White's attack becomes too strong, e.g., 25... ♜g8 26 ♗×d6! Or 25... f6 26 g4.

**23 ♗×e4 b×a4**  
**24 f6 ...**

A strong push, displacing both Black's minor pieces.

**24 ... ♕h6**

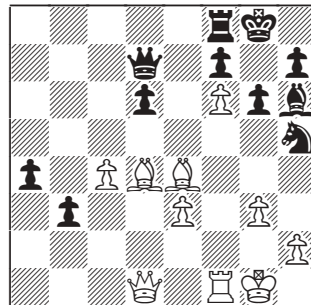
Otherwise Black's Bishop would be buried alive.

**25 e3 ...**

This small pawn move is played with a clear intention: He wants to win the Knight by g2-g4. There is little Black can do about this.

**25 ... b3**

Black is trying to make his passed pawn a force. The alternative 25...♖e8 failed tactically to 26 ♖f3 ♗e6 27 ♙d5 ♙xe3+ 28 ♖g2, winning the Bishop (not 28 ♖h1? ♖h3 29 ♙xe3 ♗xg3+ and Black wins).



**26 ♖f3 ...**

White hesitates, with the result that the initiative is handed over to Black. The obvious 26 g4 was crucial. Black must then strive for the utmost activity for his pieces by 26...♖e8, with the following possibilities: (a) 27 ♖f3 ♙xe3+ 28 ♙xe3 ♗e6 29 g×h5 ♗×e4 30 ♖×e4 ♖×e4 31 ♙c1 (the only ways to stop the pawns) 31...g×h5 and a draw is the most likely outcome. The passed pawn outweighs the Bishop. (b) 27 ♙d5 ♙xe3+ 28 ♙xe3 ♖×e3 29 g×h5 a3 and again it looks like the pawns are just enough counterweight, this time for White's King's Bishop.

The situation is a lot sharper here, due to the presence of the Queens. In this respect, White's unsafe King's position plays a role. This is borne

out in the variation 30 c5 dxc5 31 Qxb3 Rd3 32 Rc2 Rg4+ and Black has a perpetual.

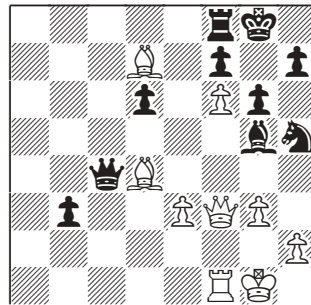
26 ... Qg5!

Furman may have overlooked this cunning reply. Now 27 g4 is less effective, because of 27...fxg6 28 Qxf6 Qxf6 29 Rxf6 Rxf6+ 30 Qg2 Rxc4 and Black has won too many pawns for the pieces.

27 Qc6 ...

The best practical solution. White gives up the idea of winning the Knight and concentrates on eliminating Black's queenside pawns.

27 ... Rc7  
28 Qxa4 Rxc4  
29 Qd7 ...



Threatening again to win the Knight by 30 g4. Botvinnik now comes up with a sharp continuation that gives him the upper hand.

29 ... Rc2  
30 Rf2 b2!

The point of the previous move. White must take the b-pawn.

31 Qxb2 Rb1+  
32 Qg2 Qxf6

Now Black's combination become clear. After 33 Qxf6 fxg6 34 Rxf6 there is a check at b7, winning the Bishop.

33 ♔×f6 ♖×f6  
 34 ♔c6 ...

It is understandable that White does not want to go into the ending with only heavy pieces, because he has a chance to keep to keep an active Bishop against a passive Knight. After 34 ♖×f6 ♖b7+ 35 ♖g1 ♖d7 36 ♖d1 ♖d8 37 e4 ♖e8! White should be prepared to defend a three-against-two queen ending which is by no means easy.

34 ... ♖c1

A careless move that allows White to equalize. More precise was 34...♖b6! With the idea that after 35 ♔a4 ♖h5 White cannot move his Bishop to b3. If 36 e4, then 36...f6 keeps some winning chances alive. Possibly exchanging the Knight for the Bishop would then still be White's best option, but as I said: The draw is not easy to obtain after that.

35 ♔a4! ...

The saving move. Now 35...♖h5 36 ♔b3 is OK for White. So Black must attack the Bishop again, leaving his d-pawn unprotected.

35 ... ♖c4  
 36 ♖×f6 ♖×a4  
 37 ♖×d6 ♖e4+  
 38 ♖f3 ♖c8

The last try. The Rook threatens to invade on c2. White, however has an active queen move that at the same time protects the Rook.

39 ♖f6 ...

Much better than 39 ♖f4 ♖c2+ 40 ♖h3 ♖e6+ 41 g4 h5 and White is still in trouble.

39 ... ♖d5  
 40 g4 ...

Draw agreed. A fascinating struggle for the initiative that showed both players from their strongest side.

**(84) Botvinnik-Furman, January 9, 1961** 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♘b5 a6 4 ♘a4 ♗f6 5 O-O ♘e7 6 ♘xc6 dxc6 7 d3 ♗d7 8 ♗bd2 O-O 9 ♗c4 f6 10 ♗h4 g6 11 ♘h6 ♖f7 12 ♗e2 ♗c5 13 g3 ♘h3 14 ♗g2 ♗e6 15 c3 ♘f8 16 ♘xf8 ♗xf8 17 ♖ad1 ♖d8 18 ♗a5 ♖b8 19 ♖d2 c5 20 ♗c4 ♖e8 21 f4 exf4 22 gxf4 f5 23 e5 ♖d7 24 ♗f3 ♘xg2 25 ♗xg2 b6 26 ♗e3 ♖ed8 27 ♗e2 ♖h8 28 ♗g2 ♗e8 29 ♗d1 ♗g8 30 ♖f3 ♗g7 31 a3 ♗e6 32 ♗a4 a5 33 ♗c6 ♖g7 34 h4 ♗f7 35 ♖f1 ♗d7 36 ♗xd7 ♖gxd7 37 ♖e2 ♖g7 38 ♗e3 a4 39 ♖d1 b5 40 h5 ♖f7 41 ♖f2 ♗g7 42 hxg6+ hxg6 43 ♖h2 ♗e6 44 ♖h7+ ♖g8 45 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 46 ♖f3 ♖f7 47 ♗g2 ♖d8 48 ♖g3 b4 49 ♗e3 bxc3 50 bxc3 ♖b8 51 ♗c4 ♖b3 52 ♖c1 ♗f8 53 ♖f2 ♗e6 54 ♖e3 ♖g7 55 ♖f3 ½-½

**(85) Botvinnik-Furman, February 17, 1961** 1 e4 c5 2 f4 ♗c6 3 ♗f3 g6 4 ♘b5 ♘g7 5 c3 e6 6 d3 ♗ge7 7 ♘e3 d6 8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4? f5 10 e5 ♗d5 11 ♗e2 O-O 12 ♗c3 ♗xe3 13 ♗xe3 ♗b6 14 O-O dxe5 15 fxe5 ♘d7 16 ♖fe1 ♖ad8 17 ♗f2 ♖fe8 18 ♖ad1 ♘f8 19 ♘f1 ♘c8 20 a3 ♖h8? 21 b4 ♗c7 22 d5 exd5 23 ♗xd5 ♗g7 24 ♘b5 ♘e6 25 ♘xc6 bxc6 26 ♗f6 ♖xd1 27 ♖xd1 ♖e7 28 ♖d8 ♗h6 29 h4 ♗c1+ 30 ♖h2 ♖g7 31 ♗g5 ♘g8 32 ♗d4 c5 33 bxc5 1-0 (1.47 - 2.16)

**(86) Furman-Botvinnik, February 18, 1961** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗f3? ♘g7 4 g3 c6 5 ♘g2 d5 6 O-O O-O 7 b3 ♘f5 8 ♘b2 ♗bd7 9 ♗bd2 ♘e4 10 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 11 ♗c2 e6 12 ♖fd1 f5 13 ♗e1 ♗b6 14 ♖ac1 ♖ae8 15 ♗d3 ♖f7 16 b4 e5 17 cxd5 cxd5 18 dxe5? ♗xe5 19 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 20 ♗b3 ♖g7 (20...d4! +=) 21 e3 ♖d7 22 ♘xe4 fxe4 23 ♗c5 ♖de7 24 ♖xd5 ♘d6 25 ♗c3+ ♖g8 26 ♗c4 ♖g7? 27 ♗d4+ ♘e5 28 ♗d2 ♘b8 29 ♖c4 1-0 (1.57 - 1.36)

**(87) Furman-Botvinnik, February 22, 1961** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♘b4 4 e3 O-O 5 ♘e2 c5 6 ♗f3 b6 7 O-O cxd4 8 exd4 ♘xc3 9 bxc3 ♘b7 10 ♘g5 d6 11 ♗d2 ♗bd7 12 a4 ♗c7 13 ♘f4 ♗e4 14 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 15 a5 e5 16 ♘g3 f5? 17 f3 ♘c6 18 ♗b1 ♖ae8 19 axb6

a×b6 20 ♗d3 g6 21 ♖e1 ♖a8 22 ♜b4 ♖×a1 23 ♖×a1 ♖e8 24 ♗c2  
 ♖a8 25 ♖e1 ♖e8 26 ♗f2 ♗b7 27 ♖b1 ♗a6 28 ♗a4? ♖c8 29 ♖d1  
 e×d4 30 c×d4 ♗×c4 31 ♗g3 ♗f6 32 ♗×d6 ♗d5 33 ♗×c7 ♗×b4 34  
 ♗×b6 ♗d5 35 ♗d7 ♗×b6 36 ♗×c8 ♗×c8 37 ♖b1 ♖f7 38 ♖b7+  
 ♗e7 39 ♖f2 f4 40 g3 g5 41 h4 g×h4 42 g×f4 ♖f6 43 ♖g2 ♗e6 44  
 ♖h2 h6 45 ♖b6 ♗d5 Unfinished (2.28 - 2.20)

**(88) Botvinnik-Furman, February 24, 1961**

*Notes by Jan Timman*

**1 g3            ...**

Botvinnik has played this opening move one other time in his career: against Szilagyi, Amsterdam 1966. That game was played in the first round. I remember a story that I read in the paper then, as a 14-year-old: During the opening ceremony an official had made the remark that 1 g3 was not a very good opening move to play for a win. Therefore Botvinnik had played the move to prove the official wrong. I remember that at the time I was wondering why - and I still am - this official had made this claim.

**1 ...            d5**  
**2 ♗f3            ...**

Just like in the game against Szilagyi, Botvinnik was apparently not ready to allow Black the d5-e5 center. This would imply that he would have answered 1...e5 with 2 c4.

**2 ...            g6**  
**3 ♗g2           ♗g7**  
**4 O-O           e5**  
**5 d3            ♗e7**  
**6 ♗bd2        O-O**  
**7 c4            d4**

A positional error, as early as move 7. By releasing the tension in the



center, Black lets his opponent build up a strong initiative in the center. After the flexible 7...c6, he would not have had any particular opening problems.

**8 b4            ...**

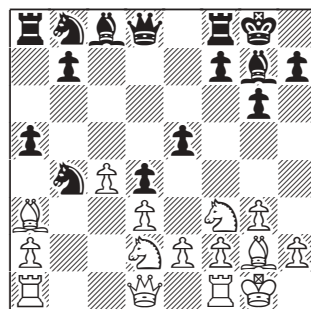
Of course White has a traditional bind on the Queenside now. If Black would have a set-up with his Knight on f6 and the e-pawn still at e7, then the situation would have been significantly better for Black; mainly the a3-f8 diagonal would have been less vulnerable.

**8 ...            a5**  
**9 b5            c5**

Black is trying to solve the situation on the Queenside. If he could keep it closed, then he would have little to worry about. But White takes en passant, obtaining squares on the Queenside.

**10 bxc6 e.p.   ♖exc6**  
**11 ♔a3        ♖b4**

For the moment Black can restrict White's activity on the Queenside by keeping a temporary stronghold on b4.



**12 ♖e1            ...**

Until this moment, the game was identical to Larsen-Chandler, Hastings 1987/88 (though with a slightly different move order). Instead of the text, Larsen played 12 ♖b3 and went on to win an impressive game

after 12... ♖8a6 13 ♗x♖4 ♗x♖4 14 ♖3 ♖x♗3 15 ♜x♗3 ♞e8 16 ♞fb1  
 ♜f5 17 ♜e1 ♜c7 18 ♗d5+ ♝h8 19 ♜x♗8! ♜x♗8 20 ♞x♗8 ♗h6 21  
 ♜df3 with more than enough compensation for the Queen.

Botvinnik has a different strategy in mind. He brings the Knight to c2 and the other Knight to b3, before exchanging on b4. Although this will bring White a slight, but solid advantage, I still feel that Larsen's approach for activating the Queen is more powerful and therefore stronger.

**12 ... ♞e8**

Black vacates the f8-square for the Bishop, in order to keep the stronghold on b4.

**13 ♜c2 ♗f8**  
**14 ♗x♖4 ...**

The same concept as in Larsen's game. White must exchange the Knight sooner or later, otherwise he cannot make progress.

**14 ... ♗x♖4**  
**15 ♜b3 ♜a6**  
**16 e3 ...**

Creating a second front, in the center.

**16 ... ♜x♗3**  
**17 ♜x♗3 ...**

Now White has the half-open f-file for the attack and his main threat is 18 ♗d5. The drawback of opening up the center is that White's pawn structure becomes less solid. The method of operating over the entire board is typical of Botvinnik: He was aiming for dynamic play in most circumstances.

**17 ... ♜f5**

A concession. Black weakens his Kingside in order to avert the threat against f7. It was, however, hard to find an alternative, because the retreat of the Knight to c7 would mean that b4 would lose its protection.

**18** ♔d2      ♖b8  
**19** a3      ...

It is interesting to note that the plan that Larsen executed immediately (taking on b4, followed by a2-a3) is done by Botvinnik in different stages. It was time to do it now, otherwise White couldn't have kept the initiative.

**19** ...      b×a3  
**20** ♗×a3      ♕b4

Active defense. The fight for the initiative is in full swing.

**21** ♔e2      ♗c7  
**22** ♗c2      ♕c3

Furman plays this part of the game very well. The text move looks daring, because the Bishop will be surrounded by pieces in the enemy camp and could easily become lost. Black has calculated precisely that he will be able to rescue the Bishop.

**23** ♖a3      b5

The logical follow-up of the two previous moves. Black is looking for counterplay on the Queenside.

**24** ♗c5      ...

The best way to attack the Bishop. The alternative 24 ♗c1 would have worked well after 24...♕b2 25 ♖b2 ♗×c1 26 ♖×c1 followed by 27 ♖cb1. Much better is however 24...b4 25 ♖b3 ♗d7 with the unpleasant threat of 26...♕a4.

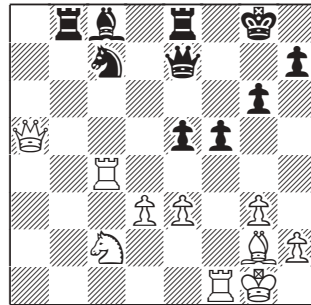
24 ... ♖e7

Now 24...b4 was wrong because after 25 ♖b3, there would be a double threat of 26 ♗a4 and 26 ♖fb1, winning the b-pawn. With the text move, Black forces the exchange of his Bishop for White's Knight which makes it slightly easier to withstand the pressure.

25 ♖×c3 ♖×c5  
26 ♖d2 ...

Protecting the Rook, thus forcing Black to take on c4.

26 ... b×c4  
27 ♖×c4 ♖e7  
28 ♖a5 ...



White has managed to keep the initiative. With the text move White hopes to force the enemy Knight to a passive square. The alternative 28 ♗b4 was just not enough to keep lasting pressure after 28...♗b7 29 ♖fc1 ♗e6 and Black keeps his forces together.

28 ... ♗a6?

The decisive mistake. The Knight is stranded on a6. The only move was 28...♗b5 to keep the Knight active. Probably Black was worried about the pin along the b-file after 29 ♖b1. Still, it is not clear how White can profit after 29...♗d7. In this respect it is important that the line 30 ♗d5+ ♖g7 31 ♖cb4 ♖c5 32 ♗c4 does not work because of 32...♖a8 33 ♖×b5 ♖×a5. In general, White has a slight advantage, but on the basis of his more active piece play, but not more than that.

**29 ♖c6! ...**

Paralyzing the enemy forces. The black Knight is totally dominated.

**29 ... ♖a8**

A sad move, but there is no choice. Possibly Furman had counted on 29...♖b4. This knight sortie is more difficult to refute than one might think. After 30 ♖c7 the Queen has two squares: (a) 30...♖d6 31 ♗a7! ♕xc2 32 ♖g7+ and mate follows. It is surprising how this mating attack appears out of the blue; and (b) 30...♗f8 31 ♖b1 ♕c6 (a tricky defense) 32 ♗d5+! ♕e6 33 ♖xb8 ♕xb8 34 ♗xe5 and White has won an important center pawn while maintaining his positional trumps.

**30 ♖b1 ...**

Restricting Black more and more. With the text move, White prevent the Bishop development (!) To b7. He was obviously not interested in the win of a pawn by 30 ♖xg6+; there is more at stake.

**30 ... ♗d8  
31 ♗c3 ♖b8**

A blunder that puts Black out of his misery. Black could hardly move a piece. The only move was 31...♖a7, but then 32 Rd6 would follow, putting Black's position on the verge of collapse.

**32 ♖xb8 1-0 (2.09 - 2.06)**

Black resigned because after 32...Nxb8 33 Qb3+ he loses a piece.

**(89) Botvinnik-Furman, February 27, 1961** 1 d4 ♕f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♕c3 ♖b4 4 e3 O-O 5 ♕e2 c5 6 ♕f3 d5 7 O-O dxc4 8 ♕xc4 ♕bd7 9 ♗d3 ♗e7 10 ♖d1? ♕b6? (10...e5) 11 ♖b3 ♕d7 12 ♕e5 ♖ac8? 13 ♕xd7 ♕bx d7 14 ♕d2 ♖fd8 15 ♗e2 cxd4 16 exd4 ♕f8 17 a3 ♕d6 18 ♕g5 h6 19 ♕xf6 ♗xf6 20 ♖d3 ♕g6 21 g3 ♕c7 22 d5 exd5 23 ♕xd5 ♗d6 24 ♖e3 ♗f8 25 h4 ♖b8 26 ♖e1 ♕e5 27 ♗h5 ♗g6 28 ♖xe5 ♗xh5 29 ♖xh5 g6 30 ♖he5 ♕xe5 31 ♖xe5 ♖c5 32 a4 a5

33 f4 b5 34 ♖c3 ♜xe5 35 fxe5 bxa4 36 ♙xa4 ♜d3 37 ♗e4 ♜e3 38 ♗f6 ♜g7 39 ♜f2 ♜xe5 40 ♗d7 ♜e4 41 b3 f5 42 ♗b6 ♜e5 43 ♗c4 ♜d5 44 ♗b6 ♜e5 45 ♗c4 ♜d5 Unfinished

**(90) Furman-Botvinnik, February 28, 1961** 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 g6 3 c4 ♗g7 4 d4 d6 5 ♗e2 ♗g4 6 d5 e6 7 h3? (7 ♗c3) 7...♗xf3 8 ♗xf3 exd5 9 cxd5 ♗e7 10 ♜b3 ♜c7 11 ♗d2 ♗d7 12 ♗c4 O-O 13 ♗f4 ♗e5 14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 O-O ♗g7? 16 a4? ♗c8 17 ♗g4 ♗b6 18 ♗a3 ♜ae8 19 ♜c2 ♜e7 20 a5 ♗a8 21 ♗f3 ♗c7 22 ♜b3 ♜b8 23 ♗c4 a6 24 ♜ae1? ♗b5 25 ♗d1 ♜be8 26 f4 ♗d4+ 27 ♜h2 ♜d8 28 ♜g3 ♜h8 29 ♗a4 ♜e7 30 ♜b3 g5 31 ♗xb5 axb5 32 ♜xb5 gxf4 33 ♜xf4 ♜d7 34 ♜ef1 f6 35 ♜g4 ♜e7 36 ♜b3 ♜dd8 37 ♜f3 ♗xb2 38 ♜h1 ♗d4 39 ♜f5 ♜de8 40 ♜h4 ♜f7 41 ♜h5 ♜ef8 42 ♜f5 ♜g7 43 ♜g4 ♜xg4 44 ♜xg4 ♜e8 45 ♜b1 ♗e5 Unfinished (2.28 - 2.28) (+=)

**(91) Furman-Botvinnik, December 17, 1961** 1 c4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 g3 c5 4 d5 d6 (4...♜a5+) 5 ♗g2 ♗f6 6 ♗c3 O-O 7 ♗f3 e6 8 dxe6 ♗xe6 9 ♗g5 ♗c6 10 ♗xe6 fxe6 11 O-O ♜e7 12 ♗g5 ♜ad8 13 ♜a4 ♜c8 14 ♜ad1 a6 15 ♜d2 ♗e5 16 ♗e4 ♜cd8 17 ♜fd1 b5 18 cxb5 axb5 19 ♜xb5 ♜b8 20 ♜a6 d5 21 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 22 ♗xf6 ♜xf6 23 ♗h3 ♜xf2+ 24 ♜h1 ♗c4 25 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 26 ♜f1 ♜xf1+ 27 ♗xf1 ♜be8 28 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 29 ♜d3 d4 30 b3 ♗e3 31 ♜g1 ♜g7 32 ♜d2 ♜f6 33 ♗g2 ♜e5 34 ♗f3 g5 35 h3 ♜f8 36 g4 ♜f6 37 ♜d3 ♜h6 38 ♜h2 ♜a6 39 a4 ♜b6 40 ♜g3 h6 41 ♗g2 Unfinished (1.59 - 1.55)

**(92) Botvinnik-Furman, December 18, 1961** 1 e4 c5 2 f4 e6 3 ♗f3 d5 4 ♗c3 dxe4 5 ♗xe4 ♗e7 6 d4 cxd4 7 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 8 ♗xd4 a6 9 g3 ♗d7 10 ♗g2 ♗f6 11 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 12 ♗e3 ♗c6 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♗xc6+ bxc6 15 O-O-O ♜d8 16 c4 O-O 17 ♗c5 ♜xd1+ 18 ♜xd1 ♜d8 19 ♗d6? ♜d7 20 b4 ♗d8 21 a4 f6 22 ♗c5 ♜xd1+ 23 ♜xd1 ♜f7 24 a5 ♗e7 25 ♗xe7 ♜xe7 26 b5 ♜d7 27 b6 c5 28 g4 f5 29 h3 g6 ½-½

**(93) Balashov-Botvinnik, March 18, 1970** 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗d2 dxe4 4 ♗xe4 ♗d7 (4...♗d7) 5 ♗f3 ♗gf6 6 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 7 ♗d3 (7 ♗c4 a6) 7...c5 (7...b6? 8 ♗e5) 8 dxc5 ♗xc5 9 ♜e2 ♗d7 10 ♗e5

♖c6 11 O-O O-O 12 ♖d1 ♜b6 13 ♗g5 ♗e7 14 ♖ab1 ♖ad8 15 b4  
 a6 16 c4 ♗a4 17 ♖d2 ♜c7 18 a3 (18 ♗f4) 18...♗d5 19 ♗xe7 ♗xe7  
 20 ♖e1 f6 21 ♗g4 ♗d7 22 ♖ed1 e5 23 ♗e3 ♗a4 24 ♖e1 ♖d4 25  
 ♗c2 ♖xd2 26 ♜xd2 ♖d8 27 ♜c3 ♗xc2 28 ♜xc2 ♖d4 29 c5 ♜d7  
 30 g3 g6 31 ♖d1 ♗c6 32 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 33 ♜c4+ ♜g7 34 f4 exf4 35  
 gxf4 ♗c6 36 ♜d5 ♜h3 37 ♜e4 h5 38 a4 ♜d7 39 b5 axb5 40 axb5  
 ♗d4 ½-½ (2.28 - 2.28)

**(94) Botvinnik-Balashov, March 19, 1970** 1 c4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3  
 ♗e7 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗f4 c6 6 e3 ♗f5 7 g4 ♗e6 8 h4 h5 9 g5 (9  
 gxh5) 9...♗d6 10 ♗ge2 ♗e7 11 ♜b3 ♗c8 12 ♗h3 ♗xf4 13 ♗xf4  
 ♜b6 14 ♜c2 (14 ♜a3; 14 ♗xc8!) 14...♗xh3 15 ♖xh3 g6 16 O-O-O  
 ♗a6 17 e4 O-O-O 18 ♗cxd5 ♗xd5 19 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 20 exd5 ♗b4  
 21 ♜c5 ♗xd5 22 ♖f3 ♜xc5+ 23 dxc5 ♖f8 24 ♜c2 1-0

**(95) Balashov-Botvinnik, March 20, 1970** 1 e4 c6 2 c4 d5 3 exd5  
 cxd5 4 d4 (4 cxd5) 4...♗f6 5 ♗c3 g6 6 ♜b3 ♗g7 7 cxd5 O-O 8  
 ♗g5 ♗bd7 9 ♗f3 ♗b6 10 ♗xf6 exf6 (10...♗xf6) 11 h3 a5 12 ♗b5  
 (12 a4) 12...a4 (12...♜e7) 13 ♗xa4 (13 ♜b4) 13...♗xa4 14 ♗xa4  
 ♜e8+ 0-1 (0.36 - 0.52)

**(96) Botvinnik-Balashov, March 21, 1970** 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3  
 c5 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗f3 ♗c6 6 g3 ♗f6 7 ♗g2 ♗e7 8 O-O O-O 9 ♗g5  
 cxd4 10 ♗xd4 ♗g4 11 ♜a4 ♜d7 12 ♖ad1 h6 13 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 14  
 ♗xc6 bxc6 15 ♗xe7 ♖fe8 16 ♖d2 ♖xe7 17 e4 ♖d8 18 exd5 (18  
 ♜a5) 18...cxd5 19 ♜xd7 ♖dxd7 20 ♖d4 ♗f5 21 g4 ♗e4 (21...♗e6)  
 22 f3 ♗g6 23 ♜f2 f5 24 ♖fd1 ♗f7 25 gxf5 ♖b7 26 b3 ♖e5 27 ♗h3  
 ♖c7 28 ♖1d2 ♖c3 29 ♖4d3 ♖c1 30 ♖e3 ♖xe3 31 ♜xe3 ♜f8 32 f6  
 gxf6 33 ♗f5 ♖e1+ 34 ♖e2 ♖d1 (34...d3+) 35 ♖c2 a5 36 ♖c8+  
 ♜e7 37 ♖c7+ ♜f8 38 ♖c8+ ♜e7 39 ♖c7+ ♜f8 40 ♖c5 d4+ ½-½  
 (2.36 - 2.33)

## Postscript 2006



*This sketch by an unknown artist of the young Botvinnik appears on the cover of one of his handwritten notebooks containing his games from the 1929 USSR Championship.*

## Background

In the mid-1990s, a cache of over 100 games of Mikhail Botvinnik were discovered. Upon closer inspection, it was determined that a large number of them had been unpublished. Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman was retained to select ten games to annotate. He also produced a survey of the games and an opening theoretical section.



*Jan Timman provided over 80 pages of handwritten annotations and text. Here is the first part of his work on game 43, Botvinnik-Kan.*



The material in this PDF e-book was originally released as software that was to be used in conjunction with a program called ChessCafe Reader. The software program Selected Games was released in 2000. A year or so after its release, the ChessCafe Reader was discontinued. These games, and Timman's notes, make for fascinating reading. The material had been prepared for release as a small book, but we never seemed to get around to actually publishing it. Finally, rather than let it sit idle, we decided to release it in PDF format and make it available free of charge to ChessCafe fans worldwide.



*Transcribing handwritten comments to formal text can be a chore. We had a number of questions for Timman which he quickly resolved. This is a copy of his note:*

Dear Hanon,  
These are the corrections. I hope everything is clear.  
Best regards, Jan Timman.

*The envelope is postmarked Amsterdam, 20.IX.99 (September 20, 1999). Three months later, the electronic version of the book was released.*

The book itself was converted to Adober's Portable Document (PDF)

format and it is presented with all the same material and games that had been included in the original ChessCafe Reader program. Enjoy...

### **Introduction**



It is perhaps stating the obvious that Mikhail Botvinnik is one of the towering figures in chess of the 20th century. Although not noted for brilliant play like Alekhine or Tal, or the intuitive grasp of position like Fischer, the three-time world champion was a formidable opponent his entire career, from the days of his youth in revolutionary Russia to his retirement as an active player over a half-century later in the Soviet Union. In the days before computers

and databases, Botvinnik set the standard for thorough preparation. His "home cooking" - as dubbed by Tal - was legendary. No one would do it as well until Kasparov - one of the many successful pupils of Botvinnik's famous chess school - came along.

### **Secret...**

For Botvinnik, there really was no substitute for hard work and training. And one of the ways he went about preparing for matches and tournaments was to play serious games under actual tournament conditions. To that end, some of the USSR's top grandmasters were recruited. Dozens (hundreds?) of games were played as part of Botvinnik's training regimen.

But there was just one catch... They were kept secret. Yes, there were rumors. No, nothing definite was known. And no, nobody said anything about them. Some in the higher echelon of the game had well-founded suspicions, but that is all they were - suspicions.

However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, restrictions on information relating to these kind of clandestine activities began to loosen. Botvinnik, who died in 1995, said little or nothing about these matches. The first hard evidence was released by Russian grandmaster Yuri Averbakh. Fifteen of these training games between himself and Botvinnik were published in *Chess in Russia* (2/1995).

### **...No More**

A few years ago, approximately 150 original Botvinnik scoresheets were acquired. Some of these games were known; many were not. Unknown Botvinnik games? Yes, the famous secret training games.

### **The Games**

The secret training games, including those played against Averbakh, along with the three Kaminer games have been collected in one of the first exclusively electronic chess books to be released - *Secret Matches: The Unpublished Training Games of Mikhail Botvinnik*. Ten of these games have been selected for in-depth annotations by Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman. In addition, Timman, a life-long admirer of the Russian world champion, has written a short article about Botvinnik's training, preparation and openings, *The Theoretical Importance of Botvinnik's Training Games*.



Annotations for two other games have been furnished by Russian grandmaster Yuri Averbakh. 18 training games were played between him and Botvinnik. In addition, Botvinnik himself would occasionally make notes on his scoresheet. These notes were sometimes just marks - an exclamation point or question mark. Other times a different move than was played in the game would be noted. These handwritten notes by Botvinnik are duly noted in the games.

### **The Players**

The training games were played against eight different players. Opponents included Averbakh (18 games), Balashov (4), Flohr (1), Furman (11), Kan (27), Rabinovich (3), Ragozin (24) and Smyslov (4). The games spanned 34 years. And there was an added bonus. Among the papers were notebooks kept by the young Botvinnik and three games (actually two complete games and one fragment) that had previously been unknown, played by the young (13-year-old) Botvinnik against someone named Kaminer.



Yuri Averbakh is one of the best known Russian grandmasters in the world today. At various times he has been the editor of *Shakhmatnaya Moskva*, *Shakhmaty v SSSR* and *Shakhmatny Biulletin*. He is probably best known as an endgame theoretician.

Averbakh released 15 of his training games in a 1995 article that appeared in the magazine *Chess in Russia*. He submitted two annotated games for this collection.

Ботвинник - Рагозин 17.11.47

1	a2-c4	e7-e5	31	d6-b6	Nd8-d7
2	Kg1-f3	Kf8-e6	32	d6-b4	b8-b4
3	c4-b5	a7-a6	33	g2-g4	b5-g4
4	c85-a4	Kg8-f6	34	f4-g4	b4-a4
5	0-0	c8-e7	35	f2-f4	Nd7-d5
6	d2-d4	e5-d4	36	Kp2-g3	b7-b5
7	g4-e5	Kf6-e4	37	Nd4-f4	b5-b7
8	f4-e4	Ke4-c5	38	f4-f7	b5-b7
9	Ca1-c6	d7-c6	39	f7-f8+	Kc8-d7
10	Kf3-d4	Kc5-c6	40	f8-f8	Nd2-m3+
11	Kd4-f5	d8-d4	41	Nb8-b7+	Kp47-e6
12	d4-d1	Ce7-f8			
13	Kb8-c3	c6-c5			
14	Kc3-d5	Cd7-c6			
15	Ce1-c3	0-0-0			
16	d4-d2	Nd8-e8			
17	d4-d1	Cd7-c6			
18	f2-f4	h7-h5			
19	Kf5-h4	Ke6-d4			
20	c2-c4	g7-g5			
21	f4-f3	Cc6-d5			
22	c4-d5	Kd4-f5			
23	Cc3-f2	g5-f4			
24	d5-d6	e7-d6			
25	e5-d6	Kf5-d6			
26	d4-d6	Cf8-d6			
27	d4-d6	Ng8-eh			
28	Cf2-c5	Ng8-f2			
29	Cc5-d4	Nb8-b1+			
30	Kg1-f2	Nh8-d8			

2. 21. 00m.  
2. 22.

*This is Botvinnik's handwritten scoresheet of his game with Ragozin. It is typical of all the scoresheets of the training games. Botvinnik used, for the most part, long algebraic notation on a plain sheet (as opposed to a printed scoresheet). Notice the parenthetical jotting to the right of Black's 10th move and the time used by the players to the right of Black's 39th move. When this information appears on the original scoresheets, it is also noted in the book. This is Game 27 of *Secret Matches*.*



Botvinnik played four games against Yuri Balashov, the only one who would not be regarded as belonging to the world champion's generation. He was a member of Karpov's analytical team in the 1978, 1981 and 1984 world championship matches.

Salo Flohr was among the world's strongest players in the 1930s. Although he only played Botvinnik once (that we know of) in these training games, it was a draw. Interestingly enough, in 1933, these two had played a twelve-game match which ended 6-6, with each winning two games and the other eight games drawn.



Semyon Furman is probably best remembered outside Russia as Anatoly Karpov's trainer from 1969, until Furman's death in 1978. Although active as a chessplayer into the 1970s, he had his most successful results in the 1950s.

Ilya Kan played more training games, 27, against Botvinnik than any other player. He also was most active in the 1930s. Although not well known outside of Russia, he provided Botvinnik strong opposition in the training games. He participated in ten USSR championships, his best result being in 1929 when he finished in third place.



Three games were played between Botvinnik and Rabinovich. Unfortunately, there were two players named Rabinovich that could have been his opponent, Abram and Ilya. Although not specified on any of the scoresheets, Botvinnik most probably played against Ilya Rabinovich. The training games were played in 1937 and Abram would have been 58 or 59 at the time, while Ilya would have been 48. Ilya also was very active as player in the 1930s; Abram did not play in any major tournament after Moscow 1930.



Vyacheslav Ragozin played more training games against Botvinnik than anyone except Kan. Active from the beginning of the 1930s right through the 1950s, he maintained his connection with Botvinnik for many years, acting as his second both in the world championship tournament (The Hague/Moscow, 1948) and in the 1951 world championship match against Bronstein. Ragozin was also a cor-

respondence chess grandmaster, winning the 2nd World Correspondence Chess Championship (1956-59).

Botvinnik must have wondered who benefited more from the training games he played against Vassily Smyslov. Those training games were played at the end of 1951 and the beginning of 1952. Two years later, Botvinnik would meet Smyslov in the first of three title matches, drawing that one, but losing to Smyslov in 1957 and then winning the title back in 1958.



There are 95 training games contained in this book. As noted above, 15 were published in 1995; we believe the remaining 80 are being seen for the first time by the general public. Then there are the two games and one game fragment from a 1924 match played against Kaminer. A check in the Chess Encyclopedia (Moscow 1990) reveals an entry for a one Sergei Kaminer who achieved some success as a composer of chess studies. Born in 1908, he would have been about the right age to be playing a match against the 13-year-old Botvinnik in 1924.

I would like to extend my thanks to the following people whose advice and assistance in the production of this book was very helpful: Yuri Averbakh, Glenn Budzinski, Taylor Kingston, Mike Leahy, Karsten Müller, Hans Ree and Jan Timman.

Hanon W. Russell  
December, 2000